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SPACE AND SPACIAL IMAGERY IN THE MAJOR SHORT PROSE OF ROBERT MUSIL

by

© UTE-BRIGITTE BLUNCK-DEVICQUE

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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MASTER OF ARTS

SPRING, 1982

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TO MY PARENTS

WHO HELPED ME BEGIN

AND TO MY HUSBAND

WHO HELPED ME FINISH

Abstract

For the most part, existing criticism on Robert Musil centres on the novel-torso, Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften. Hence this investigation will concentrate on developments in Musil's prose fiction leading into his late fragment, thus on the early novel, Die Verwirrungen des Zöglings Törless, and on the five novellas comprising the 1913 duology, Vereinigungen, and the 1924 trilogy, Drei Frauen.

The point of departure for this examination is the role of space and spacial imagery in these works. This theme will be traced through the short prose and into Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften to point out how symbolic movements and spacial imagery are revealing with regard to the characters' positive or negative development, as to their relationship to those modes of experience which are important elements of each work's plot. Spacial images recur throughout these works to describe the struggle of the central character with that duality--that antithesis, for example, of "rationality" and "mysticism" which proves a prominent theme throughout Musil's writings. Thus the proposed study recommends itself as a concrete approach to abstract and general themes, both actual movements and figurative flights and departures emerging as a reflection of inner struggles and developments.

Chapter One deals with Die Verwirrungen des Zöglings Törless, showing how Musil establishes in this debut-work a

link between actual movements --in this case the hero's perigrinations relative to the school's jurisdiction-- and inner relationships to varying modes of thought and experiences. Chapter Two and Three apply a similar approach to the duology and trilogy, respectively, showing the figures' mobility --or lack of it-- as indicative of their capacity to relate to a reality which is problematic in its division into two ways of thinking and feeling.

Chapter Four attempts an overview of Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften from this established point of view, showing how this complex last work develops in detail the main character's relationship to the rational and mystical with the prominent use of such spacial imagery as journeys, departures, returns and window scenes, in this manner facilitating an understanding of the protagonist's method of dealing with what Musil himself refers to as the "true and ineluctable antithesis of existence." As with such figures as Törless, Claudine and von Ketten, Ulrich's movements show the development of a healthy flexibility.

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Introduction

Between Robert Musil's first successful novel, Die Verwirrungen des Zöglings Törless (1906), and the Mann ohne Eigenschaften torso which occupied the last decade or more of his life, (1932-1942), stand the five novellas comprising the duology, Die Vereinigungen (1911), and the trilogy Drei Frauen (1924).

These short prose works are obviously unique in Musil's oeuvre as masterfully crafted short works of the mature artist. Pursuing in variegated complexity the sensitive themes introduced in the debut novel, and doing so without falling prey to that painstakingly scrupulous exactitude and integrity which rendered the last novel, with its numerous brilliant premises, a tragic fragment, these five novellas have justifiably been seen as a representative highpoint in Musil's artistic development, as for example by F.G. Peters in his recent monograph.[1] Thus, where in recent years Musil-criticism has preponderated in studies concentrating on the late opus magnum, this study will concentrate on the five novellas, tracing through them lines of development which flow from early to late novel, and expanding in this way upon studies by Annie Reniers-Servranckx, for example, and Raleigh Whitinger, which have already pointed to such concrete motifs as journeys and departures as a starting point for examining "constancies" and "developments" in

Musil's prose fiction.[2]

The point of departure for closer examination of these two novella-cycles in this investigation is the theme of space and spacial imagery prominent in all of these works. In novella-cycles and novels alike, actual external movements --between two distinct spacial or geographical areas, for example, or between settings of dark, confining closeness and light, airy spaciousness --are a significant element in the depiction of internal action. In the Törless novel, for example, it is the hero's movements relative to his school's sphere of jurisdiction --in particular his seven "escapes" from the classroom or dormitory to the red chamber-- which provide the method for conveying the hero's inner crises.

In the Vereinigungen cycle, the action of Vollendung der Liebe consists of one main journey for Claudine--a flight outside of the realm of her familiar existence and emotions to a location where she becomes isolated physically as well as emotionally. Once again, this movement in the physical sense is reflective of the central character's inner struggles with her own unaccustomed feelings and their consequent development.

The Veronika work comprises a counterbalance to Vollendung der Liebe. Where one woman moves outwards, the other retreats into an enclosed space, thus forming the cyclical image which will be in evidence throughout Musil's work.

In the Drei Frauen trilogy, the same holds true. In Grigia, Homo's flight from his family and home also leads to a total isolation in a setting far removed from reality. He is unable to complete the cycle, and will therefore not survive.

With regard to Die Portugiesin, it can be noted that significant events of von Ketten's life are comprised of departures and returns from his castle. His personal crisis attains its climax when an opportunity for movement is no longer afforded him. Later, he will resolve his dilemma with his cat-like climb over the wall surrounding his castle, and will thus prove himself in possession of the flexibilty that allows him completion of the cycle and consequent survival.

Tonka parallels Grigia in that here, too, there is a character who cannot complete the pendular, cyclical movement. Tonka's journey into confinement is one-way, thus indicating that her fate will be like Homo's.

Finally, in Mann ohne Eigenschaften, Ulrich's life, even before his crucial journey home at the novel's midpoint, is characterised by a series of significant departures and equally significant returns. In this work the image of pendular, measured action, a fine balance between two modes of existence will be most evident. It is a clear indication of Ulrich's inner development and turmoil, a reliable indicator of what occurs within the complex main character.

To be sure, Musil's concern in these works regarding the characters' inner emotional and spiritual developments speaks against over-estimating the importance of elements of superficial plot and external action. Nevertheless, the possible links between real movements and the images of space and motion so prominent in novels and novellas alike, in describing emotions and inner developments, suggest the investigation of space and spacial imagery in these works might contribute to the understanding of major themes and developments in Musil's prose fiction.

Chapter One

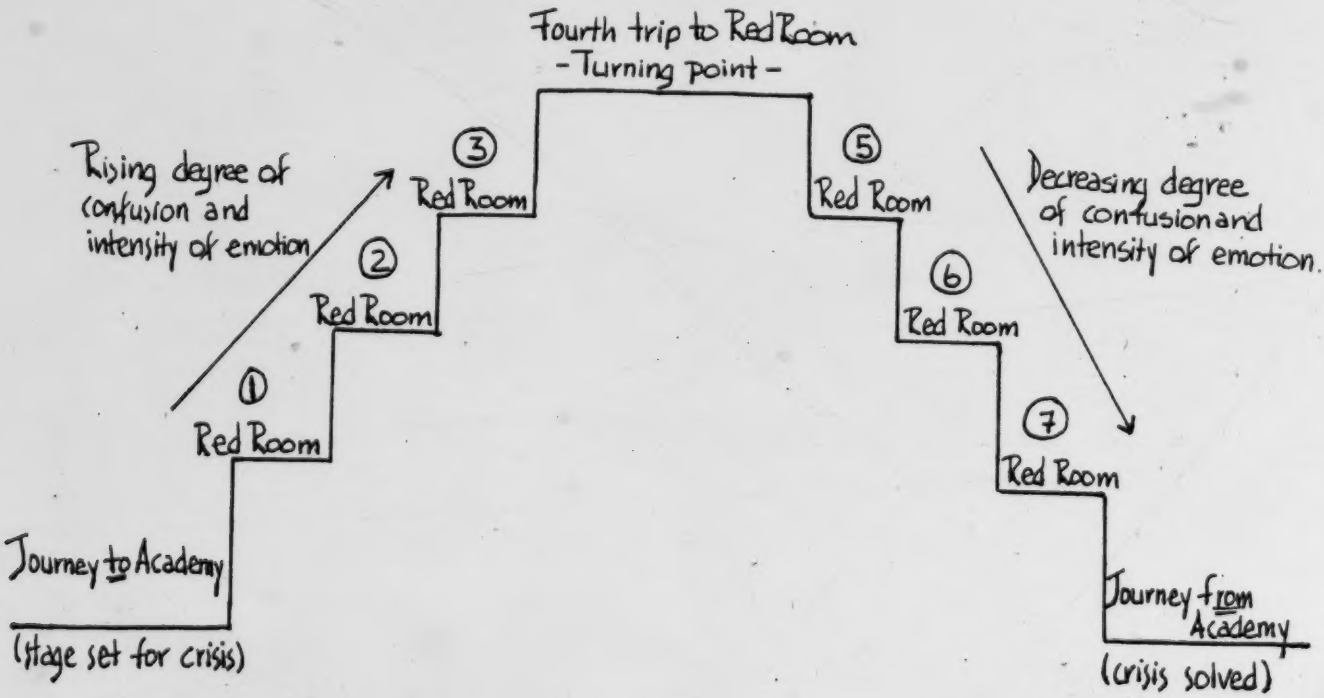
Die Verwirrungen des Zöglings Törless

In an examination of the Törless novel it is important to acknowledge the vital role played by the introductory quotation by Maeterlinck, to adopt it as an expression of themes and images significant throughout the work. In it Maeterlinck states the concept of duality between thoughts and emotions and their expression and then continues with a deliniation of that concept, using images of space and light. It discusses two realms: one might be termed the "pre-verbal" sphere of unexpressed emotions and thoughts. Images of submerged treasure are used to describe these feelings and thoughts. They glitter through the darkness of water, suggesting potential wealth. The other sphere, the "verbal" realm, encompasses the act of expression. It lifts the "treasure" out of the water, renders it clearer. But it remains in some way inadequate, a superficial rendition where the submerged glittering "treasure" becomes no more than shards of glass. Here the images incorporate surface, bright light, and clarity.

Musil's reason for the choice of this all-important introduction is soon evident. The struggle of the main character, Törless, with these two realms in the course of his activities at the military academy, his anguished

attempt to sort out their meaning and relationship in his own life comprises the bulk of the novel's action. Musil's account of Törless' confrontation with the two spheres incorporates an extension of the imagery introduced by the opening quotation; actual physical movement, as well as images of light and space, convey the internal or emotional progression.

Törless' encounters with painfully unexpressable "pre-verbal" thoughts and feelings are often presented as figurative moves from the brightly lit, clearly defined "surface" into the darkness of hidden chambers or secluded locations where personal introspection is possible. Indeed, the plot's structure is based on Törless' physical journeys between one "realm" and the other. Viewed simply, the structure is almost geometric.



The story begins with the long indirect walk back to the school, and concludes with Törless' departure. The central core of action within the realm of the academy is comprised of Törless' seven flights to the red chamber. Thus there is a symmetrical construction of physical movements by the hero, which clearly indicate encounters with different modes of experience, and which reflect his internal emotional and intellectual development. These external actions, together with imagery of light and space, function as a vehicle for the author's portrayal of the central problems dealt with in the work.

The story is set in two contrastive locations: the academy's sphere of jurisdiction, and other realms either closed out, or hidden within: thus on one hand the classroom, the study hall and dormitory, and on the other hand both the town and the secret hiding place known only to the few. Although not much actual distance separates them, they differ greatly in both nature of thought as well as in physical description. The school represents that realm which can be equated with Maeterlinck's "second sphere." It advocates rational, straightforward thoughts and actions. The bewildering thoughts and "pre-verbal" feelings experienced by Törless are (according to its concepts) not acknowledged, therefore repressed; only logical, rational ideas are encouraged.

The town, on the other hand, is representative of a loose, much less rigid environment. It has no walls, as

does the academy to isolate itself. Emphasis by the author is on dark corners, hovels, dirt and animals. Here, there is a great deal more freedom of thought simply because there are no regulations that govern emotions and ideas. The seemingly more "natural" atmosphere, where emotions are unshackled, is a constant lure to Törless, as are the emotions he experiences as a result of contact with this (for him) unfamiliar atmosphere. Later this atmosphere will be found in the red chamber.

Törless' response to the military academy provides a key to the understanding of the main ideas presented in the work. The constant urge to "escape" its physical and emotional boundaries --his movement between classroom and red chamber--reflects his intense inner struggle with the two spheres in the introductory motto.

At the outset of the story, Törless' external action is already suggestive of the nature of his problems. The basic movement throughout the initial episode is <u>towards</u> the academy. It is important to note, however, that the line of movement is <u>by no means a solid one</u>; it is interrupted on more than one occasion by detours, both literal and figurative. (This interrupted journey theme will be in evidence throughout the remainder of the work). As they march through the peasant quarter,a realm quite different from the academy, Törless' thoughts are drawn to it. Then, dreading the return to school life's monotony, he stops at the cafe. He lingers there awhile, contemplating this

unfamiliar environment. This is followed by a visit to Bozena, the village prostitute -- a still more radical "detour" from the "path" of academy life. The realization by means of this strange, excitingly dangerous world of a completely different side of life than the one he to which he is accustomed is the doorway to a realm of unfamiliar dark emotions. Confused, he resorts to comparisons with the world he knows, but is stunned by the fact that his mother (in his eyes the image of pristine femininity) is called repeatedly to mind as he struggles with his emotions towards Bozena and the situation surrounding her.

These detours and the confused reaction they elicit are a clear indication that Törless harbours some conflict or uncertainty of emotions with regard to the school. He is drawn to both: the rigid rationality of the academy of which he outwardly and consciously strives to become a member, as well as the need for diversions and escapes from that realm. The thought of returning to the academy becomes increasingly oppressive to Törless. On the last leg of his journey back his emotions are by no means positively inclined towards the school; this confuses and disturbs him.

Törless is fully aware that the academy and the ideas it stands for are constricting and stifling. This is suggested by Musil's use of linear imagery:

> Törless sah nicht rechts noch links, aber er fühlte es. Schritt fur Schritt trat er in die Spuren, die soeben erst vom Fusse des Vordermanns in dem Staube aufklafften,--und so fühlte er es:...als einen steinernen Zwang, der sein ganzes Leben in diese Bewegung--Schritt fur Schritt--auf dieser einen

> Linie, auf diesem einen schmalen Streifen, der sich durch den Staub zog, einfing und zusammenpresste....Törless seufzte unter diesem Gedanken, und bei jedem Schritte, der ihn der Enge des Instituts nähertrug, schnürte etwas immer fester in ihm zusammen.[3]

It is precisely this constriction and confinement which Törless fears. For him, the academy suggests an abrupt, painful break with feeling and, in his estimation, life itself:

> Jetzt schon klang ihm das Glockenzeichen in den Ohren. Nichts fürchtete er nämlich so sehr wie dieses Glockenzeichen, das unwiderruflich das Ende des Tages bestimmte--wie ein brutaler Messerschnitt....Nun kannst du gar nichts mehr erleben, während zwölf Stunden kannst du nichts mehr erleben, fur zwölf Stunden bist du tot...das war der Sinn dieses Glockenzeichens. (16)

It is clear that young Törless displays the basic (but as yet unrefined) characteristics of an individual native to the first sphere. He exhibits intense emotions with which he has difficulty dealing. The fact that these emotions do not coincide with what he feels is expected of him as an ideal cadet adds to his sense of alienation. Prior to the novel's present Törless has made several attempts to remain in contact with what is in a manifold sense "the outside world." With his letters to his parents at home and with his friendship with the religious prince, he has reached beyond the known sphere to which normal school life confines him. The letters reach to his past childhood, and reveal his efforts to express his own confused emotions. Since this is difficult for him to do in the framework of school life, he resorts to the letters to release the tension his

emotions are creating. With the friendship to the prince, he reaches for a social class and religious attitude different from those he has known. The boy and what he represents (philosophical, religious ideas -- ethereal concepts not based on concrete proof or reality) facinates a Törless who is as yet uncertain about his opinions concerning these concepts. By approaching his young classmate's faith with the school's rational "yardstick," Törless destroys the friendship and thus the opportunity to escape to this "Quelle eines feinen psychologischen Genusses" (11) becomes less and less possible, until soon escape is found only in gloomy introspection. As the novel begins, Törless is but superficially a well-adjusted cadet, his marching along with his boisterous comrades concealing a desperate inner emptiness.

It can be seen then how Törless' fluctuation between strenuous outward efforts to become a successful product of the academy's ideals and his anguished attempts to develop within himself "inner spiritual" forces is a direct reflection of his struggle to come to terms with precisely those two facets dealt with in the introductory motto: on one hand clearly expressed thought, intentions represented by the everyday "daylight" life of accepted school activity; on the other hand subjective emotion, matters such as faith and inexpressable thoughts called to mind in the "dark, secluded" realms, hidden from academy life. Thus the three

detours--the episodes in the slavic sector, in the cafe and in Bozena's abode--are more than simple physical movements which serve to further the plot of the story. Törless emerges from each of these episodes even more torn between his two modes of experience; on one hand he is drawn to escapes to this dark and mysterious world, on the other hand he struggles to remain a conscientious cadet, attempting to find in his studies some interest which might render his escapes unnecessary. His attempt to come to terms rationally with these intense and inexplicable feelings is a frustrating one.

Thus, in the long introductory episode of the work (pages 7-36), Törless' return to the academy, his conflict and his position within it are made clear. A further presentation and his method of coping with this conflict are given within the setting of the academy itself--the central portion of that symmetrical pattern evident in the novel's episodes.

Törless' return to the academy heralds the outset of the work's central crisis. The first portion of the work has exposed Törless' inner conflict, using as a vehicle Törless' movement between the dull restricted "path" of academy life and the realms where he is exposed to vastly different experiences.

The academy itself is the location of the continuing presentation of Törless' conflict. The two distinct loci contained within it parallel the contrasting "spheres"

already introduced in the opening episodes. The "daylight" realm of academy life is represented by the classroom, dorm, study hall etc. of the school, and Törless' thoughts in adherence to the academy concepts.

The contrasting environment is encountered in the red chamber to which Törless escapes on several occasions. This chamber is hidden from everyday academy life, and the thoughts and emotions he experiences as a result of his visits there are correspondingly "dark" in their opposition to academy rules and concepts.

For the other cadets, the red room is but a physical retreat from the areas controlled by the rules of the institute. For Törless it represents a good deal more. He remains detached and objective towards the actions of his classmates and develops consciously and carefully his conclusions regarding them. The room's attraction for him is the atmosphere of unusual experiences which had lured him into detours before his arrival. He alone is fascinated by this hidden atmosphere charged with the idea of:

> ...ein Zustand plötzlicher, neuer Gebundenheit, in dem schon die ganze Zukunft enthalten ist; eine auf die Schärfe eines Nadelstichs konzentrierte Inkubation... (46)

With the introduction of the Basini case, Törless' vague sensations are intensified. It comes as a shock to him that Basini could in fact be guilty. That a person in a position similar to his own (that is, a cadet of his social status) could plunge so suddenly, as if through a trapdoor, into such a different world (one of depravity and

corruption) is difficult for him to grasp. He is thus exposed once more to the confusing aspects of life that were shown him in Bozena's room. It should be understood that it is not so much the actual actions which take place that are so confusing to Törless, but rather the feelings and emotions he experiences as a result of them. Consequently, the red chamber becomes associated with some of his most frightening and irrational thoughts.

Törless moves three times between classroom and red room for critical observations of Basini. As his observations are prolonged and repeated, his involvement in classroom activity becomes more and more intense. This also applies to the degree of emotional release he allows following each visit. What in the first chamber episode is simply a confused response to Basini evolves into a powerful sexual attraction. This in itself indicates Törless' increasing desperation.

It can also be observed that the episodes in the red room are indicative of a contrast between the cadet's attraction to the other sphere and his desperate adherence to the academy's way of thinking. The latter is obvious in his continued frantic attempts to retain a hold on "order" and "justice," on the well-regulated life that he strives to become accustomed to, advocated by the academy. In the language and manner of that institution, he passes judgement on Basini: "Zu uns passt er nicht mehr" (47). Basini has become an example of what evils can befall an individual in

Törless' own position. Törless' judgement (or attempt at one) is indicative again of the struggle to restore order to his own thoughts and emotions in the only manner to which he has been exposed until now.

The occurrences directly following each episode in the chamber adhere to a pattern equally symmetric to the pattern of "escapes." After each visit to the red room, Törless attempts a restoration of clarity and order to his thoughts, which become confused and panicky as a result of his "revelations" in the red room. The thoughts and emotions he experiences in its isolation are difficult to apply to his existence in the "daylight" of everyday academy life. Each time he flees the chaotic environment and seeks instead that protective order of the institute. Each time, he gains new insight into his own position with relation to the two.

After the first episode in the red chamber involving Basini, Törless does his best to avoid that individual, so that the emotional jolt he has experienced will be lessened. Perhaps with the thought of removing Basini, Törless writes to his parents, requesting their advice and condemnation of the delinquent cadet. In the attempt to elicit from them the same disgust that he himself feels, it is notable that he does not voice his own feelings (even in written form, as he did at first). They are by no means buried, however, for they become evident once more, calling him to the red chamber. We can see his attempt to restore clarity to his confused position by turning to the academy's value judgements

and concepts, but he is unsuccessful. He attempts only a removal of the problem's cause, not a recognition of an attempt to deal with it. Of course this manner of dealing with it is ineffectual and the resulting confusion draws him back to the red chamber in the hope that he will find an answer there.

Following the second flight to the red room, a similar pattern of reactions may be observed. Törless' physical return to "sunshine" and "daylight" indicates his attempt at restoring clarity to his own confused emotions. As he reclines against the school's wall (indicative of his emotional leaning on the security afforded by the school's mode of thought) he becomes aware of the "endless" hole in the clouds. Initially, he is horribly frightened by his discovery, and instinctively, he relies on the explanation given him by his schooling regarding the concept of infinity. He retreats to the approach put forth by the academy, and attempts to explain and describe the phenomenon of infinity in terms of what he has been taught by his mathematics instructor. Perhaps there is hope on his behalf that a union with the mathematical concept and his own perception will afford him an operable method of contact, a handle that will help him to deal with these awesome discoveries and feelings.

The important aspect of this discovery of infinity is the realization that the concept of "dual nature" which he perceives in the sky's height can be applied to all things.

Thus Törless has purposely sought out safety in daylight only to discover that the bright sky can house deepness and mysterious aspects as well. However, he now has words for those concepts, words he has learned in the classroom. Whether he contemplates Basini's guilt or the concept of infinity, both (or anything) can be defined in the ordered, rational terminology of the classroom. Törless has begun to perceive the duality of existence (reflective of the ideas put forth in the introductory motto) and is now in the position to prepare himself for such an existence, making use of his new-found knowledge and sensitivity.

There is a definite positive progression in Törless' manner of solving his confusion and problems --from the static defensive manner of retaliation to the active confrontation of the problem. In the initial stage, Törless seeks only to remove what he believes to be the cause of his problem, that is, Basini. In this manner of avoiding the problem, he must not deal with it or acknowledge it.

This method of course proving itself ineffective, Törless is forced to face and recognize the problem. This having been achieved, he is in a position to apply his knowledge to aid him in coming to terms with his confusion.

After awakening from a dream in which his parents, teachers, friends (in short, all influential persons in his life) appear before him, he realizes with a smile that he has developed (on his own) ideas and theories that the "little men" like the mathematics instructor, and even Kant

cannot grasp. These ideas, he feels, should be put to paper.

In a stumbling attempt, Törless seeks to compile his own treatise, clarifying his position in the duality of his own existence. He uses terminology, methods and vocabulary learned at school, and, also interesting, writes his work in the classroom, far removed from the chamber. Thus it can be seen that he chooses the study hall as the setting, together with the rational approach of the academy as the method in order to "bring to light" his submerged "wealth" of feeling and insight.

The attempt made by Törless using his own philosophical treatise is, however, not successful. It is not possible for him to employ the terminology of the academy (which incorporates the one side of the duality he attempts to come to terms with) to justify and explain this newly discovered concept. It is logical that the terminology of one extreme cannot encompass the concepts of the other extreme or the comparison of the two.

Yet the attempt at clarifying his thoughts and emotions in writing does serve one purpose. Törless is consciously testing the academy's manner of thinking and expression and, more important, rejecting it. What is more, he knows the reason for this rejection. He looks about the classroom and feels like "ein Auserwählter" (92). In writing his paper, he has made the step from writing simply to note facts and record lectures, to jotting down inspirations and ideas, a

a process closer to art than he has come before. He has "risen above" the one-sided existence of the academy. Having now discovered the dual nature of life, his outlook towards the academy has changed considerably.

With the series of "escapes", there is evident in Törless an increasing ambivalence to the school, as well as an increasing awareness of the reasons behind his desire to escape.

He is drawn to desertion aware that these hiding places render the other side in extreme form -- yet also aware that they are the only means left open to him in the academy to come to grips with the other aspects of life.

> In his next confrontation with Basini he does indeed come to grips with such matters, and this fourth desertion impells him towards the resolution of this dilemma of which his complex response to the military academy is both symptom and cause.[4]

This fourth chamber episode and the events which surround it reveal the most intense contact with the extreme of the non-rational for Törless. It takes place during a "holiday" from the school routine, thus he is isolated with Basini, who for Törless represents the non-rational sphere, within the academy which is indicative of the purely rational.

In the study hall, alone except for Basini, Törless attempts once more to read Kant, an indication of his continuing struggle with the rational approach and his attempt to understand it. This attempt is however abandoned, as Törless flings the book away from himself in

frustrated fury:

> Aber es ging nicht...Törless warf wütend das Buch zur Erde. (95)

In the night, Törless harbours passionate, violent thoughts, all directed at Basini--a stark contrast to the numbness he felt during the day:

> Solch eine mörderische Sinnlichket war in ihm nach der Pein des gedankenlosen, stumpfsinnigen Tages erwacht. (96)

The next evening, his thoughts and emotions are still with Basini; he seems obsessed with this individual who elicits such a non-rational reaction in himself. He feels a strong urge to go to Basini and touch him. This urge finally overwhelms him, and he does go to Basini's bed. He awakens him, and on Basini's cue, they go together to the red chamber.

The trip he makes now is the most extreme swing made to this point into the non-rational. His experience with Basini borders on perversity. Eroticism is mingled with images of blood and fire:

> Der plötzliche Anblick dieses nackten, schneeweissen Körpers, hinter dem das Rot der Wände zu Blut wurde...Und Törless fühlte das Bild dieser Nacktheit wie heisse, weisse Flammen in seinen Nerven auflodern. (98)

When Basini "enlightens" him with reference to what Beineberg and Reiting have done with him, Törless is at once repulsed and attracted. But he does not succumb to the lure of this erotic, non-rational extreme yet.

Instead he tries tirelessly, in a process described as "mechanischer Gleichmässigkeit," to arrive at an explanation

of what has happened so far, and his emotions regarding it. Thus he resorts again to a logical, mathematical method to deal with his emotional aspect of his life. Once again, spacial imagery is used to describe his thought process:

> Erst ein Gedanke weckte Törless auf...zwischen dem Leben, das man lebt, und dem Leben, das man fühlt, ahnt, von fern sieht, liegt wie ein enges Tor die unsichtbare Grenze, in dem sich die Bilder der Ereignisse zusammendrücken müssen, um in den Menschen einzugehen. (106)

In short, Törless has begun to obtain a clearer understanding of the two spheres he has had to cope with until now. He has a foot in both the rational as well as the non-rational, and realizes that both are extremes, but that both elements are necessary in human existence. With this realization comes the beginnings of his attempt at a careful balance between the two, and an objectivity he has not displayed until now. Whitinger suggests that Törless is now:

> ..at the turning point away from the confused cadet, torn between extremes, and toward the morally sensitive, better balanced adult.[5]

This is indeed the case, for Törless will act with more objectivity, maturity and confidence from this point on.

Following the pattern set by the first three journeys to the red chamber, and their "corresponding experiences," Törless undergoes the most intense, total submersion in the non-rational after this trip to the red room, as Basini lures him into an erotic affair. It is interesting that the episode is constructed so that Törless seems to be

interacting with a feminine figure who, as in Musil's other works, represents the non-rational:

> Die Sinnlichkeit...war jetzt zu ihrer vollen Grösse erwacht. Sie lag nackt neben ihm und deckte ihm mit ihrem weichen schwarzen Mantel das Haupt zu. (108)

The realization of the perversity of his actions only serves as a clearer warning to Törless underlining the danger of becoming trapped in extremes. He has questioned the rigid confinement of the academy up to this point, but now he also realizes the negative aspects of the mode of existence to which he has escaped until now. For indeed, the red chamber is equal to the academy in its capacity for constriction and confinement, only in the opposite extreme.

The fifth episode in the red chamber reveals the marked change in Törless' attitude. He no longer clings to Beineberg's or Reiting's every word; instead he actually challenges their ideas. No longer does he turn to the school, its methods or its members for security and clarification. The fact that such a challenge is even possible is indicative of Törless' increasing awareness and confidence in his situation.

> For rather than falling back upon school rules, he rejects their undertakings according to his own feelings and beliefs; and rather than seeking clear explanations and definitions from the realm of school activity, he admits his own doubt.[6]

This rejection and consequent self-reliance and confidence is evident throughout the two remaining chamber episodes. Törless by no means loses the fascination

for the "other realm," but he is less and less tormented by the conflict between the two. With the help of his increasing awareness he gains the ability to turn to himself for explanations. He admits at one point to not being able to say anything about a situation, and it is important that he accepts this inability rather than turning frantically and unsuccessfully to the methods of the academy, which is just one extreme and therefore useless, for his answer.

In his final visit to the red chamber he affects a total disassociation with the perversity so fascinating to Reiting and Beineberg. It is important that he criticises his companions according to his own values, not those expected of him by the academy. There is a rejection on his part of all of the crudity and depravity to which he has been exposed in the red room. What remains though is his sense for the more positive aspects of the secret realm apart from everyday activity.

The perverse actions and Törless' response to them serve only as a vehicle for his awareness, its violent nature possibly the most effective manner in which to make an impression on his inexperienced emotions.

Throughout the last three episodes of flight to the red room, a positive development towards emotional stability can be observed in young Törless. He is seen examining and later affirming what positive insights he has gleaned through the visits to the red room and also giving consideration (using his newly discovered insights) to the

methods utilized by the school in dealing with certain situations. His criticism of them on the grounds that they are too rigid and one-sided shows us that he is now able to form his own opinions and substantiate them, an obvious move towards maturity.

There remains one more important physical movement which illuminates Törless' inner feelings--his flight away from the academy itself, just before the hearing. First and foremost, this action shows Törless' understanding and rejection of the extremes that tore him (or, more specifically, between which he tore himself). He recognizes that he must now explain his behaviour to someone other than himself. Until now, he has not had to put words to the revelations and emotions which he experienced. Doing this implies that he must come before the officials of the school (who represent the academy's ideas and concepts) and offer a justification of his "dark, mysterious" actions.

This inevitable confrontation between his newly found ideas and the norms of the institution is what frightens him and drives him to flight. When Törless does come before the teachers it is with a clear purpose in mind. He wishes to relate the thoughts he experiences to others and view their reactions, and is intent on explaining his newly discovered revelations on duality to them.

He enjoys little success, finding that these feelings are not easily explained. Although he is capable of sensing these feelings associated with the deeper "first realm" he

has not yet advanced to the point where they can be put to words. Still, his outlook has broadened:

> Törless has developed a faculty for perception or cognition which, encompassing the dark or hidden side of things, far transcends the confined outlook of the school and thus defies rational descriptions typical of it....

What is most important is not Törless' ability to sense this deeper mysterious side of things, but his reconciliation to the differences between the two.

> "Ich weiss: die Dinge sind die Dinge und werden es wohl immer bleiben; und ich werde sie wohl immer bald so, bald so ansehen. Bald mit den Augen des Verstandes, bald mit den anderen....Und ich werde nicht mehr versuchen, dies miteinander zu vergleichen." (138)

He has finally become aware both of the beauty that is evident in the other mode of being, but also the dangers that lie hidden in it. He recognizes that they are separate entities, and a fusion of them is utterly impossible. It is precisely this, a fusion, that he had attempted to attain previous to this, and the very fact that it was impossible is what lay at the root of his frustration. Relief from the terrible frustration comes not in the resolution of the problem, but in a recognition of how to deal with it.

In Törless' attempts at an explanation (to himself as well as to his instructors) it is quickly obvious that the impasse cannot be avoided. The school's atitude towards religion, philosophy, or its rigid adherence to a thought process based on anything other than fact and proof, makes the instructors too inflexible to understand Törless'

dilemma. From their point of view, he is simply somewhat "affected" and quite incorrigible. They cannot understand him through logic, therefore it is impossible to accept him.

Törless on the other hand gains something from the confrontation. What begins as an explanation and defense, concludes in an exercise in expression. Although there are times when he can barely find words for his feelings, he does express many of them. It is almost a religious experience for him, and ultimately he is not concerned with his teachers' judgement. With in part justifiable scorn, he has elevated himself to a position where he looks down on them; his experience with "duality" placing him above his instructors and affording him the insight to resign from the academy of his own accord. No longer in need of escapes from one extreme into the other,--thinking one is right, and one is wrong, yet torn between judgements of which is which-- Törless can now recognize the irreconcilability of his insights, concepts and emotions with the rigid superficial point of view of the academy. Noteworthy here is that he rejects the academy because it represents an <u>extreme</u> order and rationality.

Thus his ultimate departure from the school no longer leads to retreats like the red room, which he can now recognize as a portion of that atmosphere of extremes. Instead, it leads away from the entire setting of the red room. This can be interpreted as a rejection of dealing in

extremes --a recognition of the duality of realms and a mature acceptance of and competence in dealing with both.

With this knowledge, Törless' attitude towards his former friends, the peasant quarter, and even Bozena has undergone a change as well. He no longer subjects himself to the alarming thoughts and fears, and goes a step further in recalling his earlier fears and recognizing them as insignificant and childish.

This last departure, therefore, is a gesture rejecting both the chaotic emotions to which he had once escaped--in the chamber or at Bozena's--and the confinement of the school. Freed from this confinement, and able to resume unhampered mobility (as can be seen from his journey) he proves himself able to continue development of his character. Motion <u>within</u> the confines of the academy initiated and established the beginnings of his questioning and inner growth; now, movement outside of the school will assure its continuation. Törless' insights on his trip homeward reflect some of the newfound duality. In pondering his actions and reactions he is fully aware of the dangerous implications of the experiments with Basini, but <u>also</u> of the positive insights gleaned from the affair. Although he is ashamed, he may console himself with these positive insights, which enable him to see through the confusion he once experienced. He now has something much more essential and fundamental than what he sought to gain by dealing with reason and logical concepts.

Although Törless senses the negative implications of extremes in the deep, mysterious world to which he has subjected himself, he recognizes and anticipates what the newfound sensitivity will afford him in the future.

He is fully conscious that extremes or the restriction and confinement of ideas and thought (symbolized by actual physical confinement and loss of freedom through Musil's use of walls, darkness and other spacial images) will not allow the healthy development of his character. He therefore frees himself. Thus the confusion with which he entered the academy is dissipated, and Törless emerges as a mature, unconstricted, sensitive young adult.

He makes this last "journey" away from the military academy as a result of his newfound knowledge. Confinement and restriction is not found only in the ideas and rationality of the academy, but also in a total submersion in the extreme of emotions and chaotic thoughts. Thus the journey is made towards a conciliation of the two.

Chapter Two

Vereinigungen

I. Vollendung der Liebe

The second of Musil's works, Vereinigungen, is extremely difficult to approach. In its two components, Die Vollendung der Liebe and Die Versuchung der stillen Veronika, Musil deals with a theme similar to the one introduced in Törless--namely, the confrontation of the sensitive individual with an unfamiliar realm or sphere of existence-- but through more complex and intricate techniques.

> Musil steadily rewrote what he had already written, making "Unions" denser rather than longer. As a result of this manner of writing, the two stories have a complexity and opaqueness that make them among the most difficult works in modern German literature.[8]

To be sure, the works are difficult, but if one concentrates on the concrete observable movements and action in the story, using them as touchstones throughout the course of the plot, it may simplify understanding of a very complicated structure, for that concept of spacial imagery as a monitor of the character's "inner landscape" is still very much in evidence and effectively employed.

> Claudine's Weg is geradezu paradigmatisch, fast alle Musilschen Probleme und Motive treten in ihm und an seimem Rande auf.[9]

As mentioned, Musil touches again on the concept of

duality dealt with in Törless, but in a manner which is a great deal more obscure. At times, duality is closely entwined with ambiguity, and this last theme is employed often throughout the work, as both a concept, and a literary method. Musil thus encourages the reader to feel, rather than try to understand and analyse the work rationally. Consequently, there is a similar if somewhat milder version of the protagonist's struggle throughout the work, of rational thought vs. pure emotion.

If Vollendung der Liebe is examined in light of what has been determined in Musil's initial work, it can be seen that the usage of space and spacial imagery just seen in the chapter on Törless is used, and indeed developed further here.

Musil has chosen two main types of spacial images; those that centre around spheres or cycles, and those concerning pendular, back and forth movement.

As was the case in Törless, the basic overt action is indicative of important emotional events. Central here is a journey away from a known, rational environment, in which the protagonist finds herself vaguely uncomfortable. What is achieved in Törless by his repeated visits to the red chamber and the bizarre experiences he encounters there is paralleled closely in Vollendung der Liebe by Claudine's journey to the small mountain village where she too makes startling discoveries about herself and her experiences. It is, in fact, a town in which she has experienced events

important to her at a time in her past, and this journey to visit her daughter (a figure which will prove symbolic of her past) reveals itself to be a journey backwards into Claudine's own memory and "previous" existence in a sphere radically different to her present way of life.

Structurally, one can observe in Vollendung der Liebe, a rough parallel to Törless. Here too, Musil introduces the protagonist in the rational environment in which she has existed until this point. For Claudine, this is represented by her home and married life. In this routine world, her ideas seem to be acceptable, and she is able to express herself rationally. But she, like Törless, will embark on a journey beneath (to use Maeterlinck's symbolism) or away from the rational, into the realm of the irrational. These experiences with the emotional, the non-rational are called forth by the actual departure and train trip. Here, in the womb-like rocking space of the train car, she is isolated and alone for the first time since her marriage. She can begin to experience herself as an individual rather than one half of a relationship.

The trip includes repeated references to Claudine's thoughts as she looks out of the window, and the reader will observe that those observations are indicative of the phases of her introspection. Through the observable, concrete happenings, her development as a character can be followed.

Claudine will experience several physical "moves" that will prove important to and indicative of her inner

development and struggles. While on the train, she passes through an outside "thawing", then a subsequent "freezing", which will "gel" in her a portion of her character better adapted to existence within the isolated realm of the non-rational.

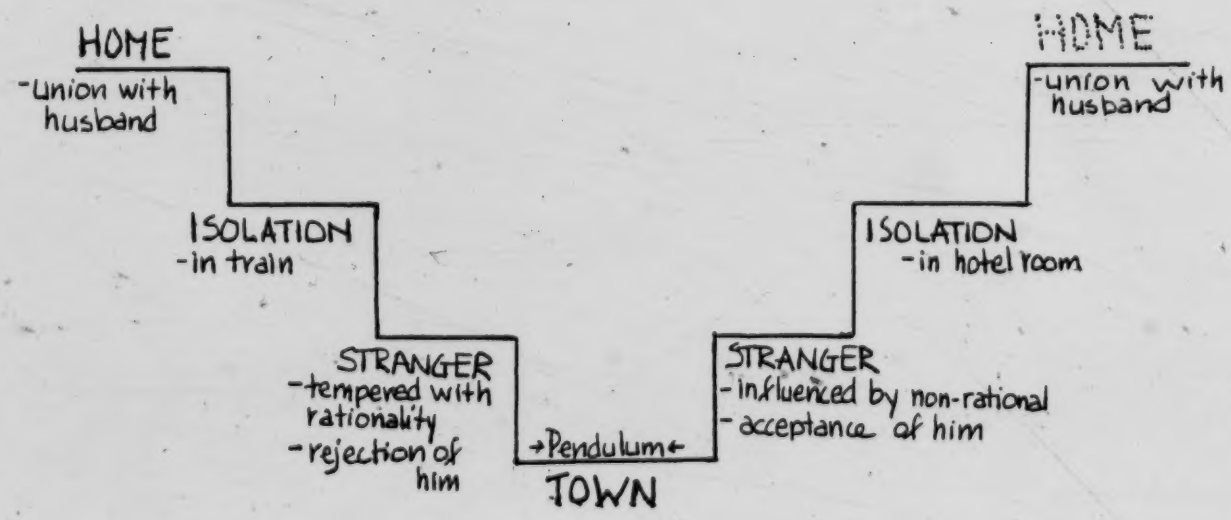
Later, she will arrive in a location, again physically isolated (by snow), in which she will encounter experiences, revelations and conflicts which result in inner struggles not unlike Törless'. Within this isolated location, she will experience again and again the physical sensations of hot vs. cold, always indicative of the pendulum within her between the forces of cool, rational thought, and the turbulent, heated emotional sphere of existence. While on this trip, she will interact with a human being who, much as did Basini, Beineberg and Reiting for Törless, brings out within her the feelings of non-rationality. That is, in the Törless novel, Basini, Beineberg and Reiting represent sides of Törless which are unfamiliar to him. Here, the stranger represents that emotional side of Claudine which she has suppressed for so long. This interaction with an actual person and a place symbolic of the "other world" of emotion and the non-rational serve to complete Claudine's character; shading in the half of her inner structure which she felt was wanting before.

Consequently, she, like Törless, will re-enter the "known" routine, rational environment with new, more complete insights. For both characters, Törless and

Claudine, this completed character (developed for us by Musil within the context of spacial imagery) is a crucial factor in their ability to cope and exist in the routine normality of their environment.

What is carefully pointed out in Törless with an actual return journey, is only suggested in Vollendung der Liebe. Here, Musil has increased the complexity of his spacial imagery to such an extent that he leaves it to the reader to complete many of the actions that are but vaguely hinted at, yet left to assume and understand. This vagueness and the confidence that the reader will fill in spaces left in the plot will become yet more evident in later works, especially in Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften.

Thus the reader can perceive in Claudine's character a geometric pattern which is closely paralleled and illuminated by outward, observable "moves" and spacial imagery. It is not unlike Törless'.



In Vollendung der Liebe, moreso than in any of his other works, Musil presents confrontation with pure emotion. He refrains from rational analysis and chooses instead to subject the reader to a constant barage of emotions. There is scarcely time to process one when another is presented. Using this technique, Musil creates an effect nearing emotional chaos, which is precisely what the main character is experiencing, however well it may be hidden under the opening scene's facade of serenity.

Musil's use of spacial imagery, then, is not restricted to the journey which comprises the second portion of the plot. He plunges the reader into this imagery immediately, even in this opening scene, using it to introduce the main character, and reveal how she does not quite mesh with the "home space" and the rational sphere it represents. (Later it will be seen that even as Musil begins this work with the spacial imagery of a room, so will he also end it in a similar manner).

In the initial scene, Musil is extremely successful in creating a "set" of utmost serenity, balance, beauty and peace. He employs so much detail that time seems to stop; the reader finds himself almost suspended in space, holding his breath. Musil himself says,"die Zeit...schien plötzlich einzuhalten" (157). This balance, the lack of passing time is indicative of the isolation in which the man and woman exist. They view all else but each other as the"outside" and are a combination of secure, accepted domesticity and

rational, nurtured, almost selectively bred intelligence. The first discussion to which we are witness is one concerning a book which both of them have read. The woman is concerned with a rational analysis of the criminal main character's conception of himself and his actions. "Glaubst du, dass er unrecht zu handeln meint?" she asks (157).

When her husband questions this approach, she attempts to justify it. But the objective reader, especially after having read the work more than once, will see that an underlying motive reveals itself in her discussion. There is a fascination, an identification with this criminal. It is not the actions and thoughts of a fictional character that she attempts to analyse and justify; it is her own.

In Vollendung der Liebe, there is once again a picture of a conflict within the individual, but where Törless and Homo encounter painful extremes, Claudine's struggles are not as defined. Her encounters will prove to be gentle swings back and forth between the borders of the two realms. Musil's images too will take the forms of pendulums and cycles.

Claudine struggles painfully, nonetheless, with understanding her own ego, her sense of "self." This unveiling of "self", the respect for a stable identity is one of the central motifs in Musil's works. It is interesting to note that in this work, the struggle for self is experienced by a woman, for especially in his later

trilogy, Musil deals with the feminine character in a much different manner.

We may perceive the character, G.,bizarre and cruel, as the woman's supressed alter-ego--the pole of existence directly opposite to her own. This sexual offender seems to act purely through impulse and emotions, that is non-rationally. She, on the other hand, acts intellectually and rationally. And yet, this has not always been the case, for she herself has committed what could be termed a sexual offense in her past, of which her illegitimate daughter is the result. Like Törless, she will confront and test this facet of her existence by means of a departure from the rational.

In the course of their discussion, it becomes evident that this seems an almost perfect union of two persons. They almost share their thoughts: "Diese beiden Menschen...dachten gemeinsam" (158); the touching of minds and spirits is as important as physical touching.

Perfect as the union may seem, however, Musil makes no less than three references to the spacial images of windows and doorways in the first three pages of the story. Yet where this union may appear closed, complete and perfect, the spacial imagery seems such as to suggest a yearning, a closed-out area, a narrowness. The room, which is the first environment connected with the woman, has dark, lidded eyes that look outward. "Die dunkelgrünen Jalousien blickten aussen auf die Strasse...wie ein Paar dunkel und gleichmutig

herabgelassene Lider..."(156).

The criminal, her alter-ego, is credited with feelings that she experiences herself:"...er ist wie ein Haus mit verschlossenen Türen... vielleicht ist er immer wieder mit tastenden Händen durch sich gegangen, um ein Tor zu finden" (158). This suggests that Claudine herself, as was Törless, is looking outward, ready for a break in the accepted and proper existence.

Her vague feelings of uneasiness are suggested with such fine subtlety that they are barely discernable --at first, almost subliminal. Even the reader feels only that there is a fissure in this seemingly flawless crystal of a relationship. This is very effectively achieved by Musil's use of sudden "jolts," breaks in the smooth serenity, somehow incongruent with the rest of the story.

Musil begins the story with a scene of serenity and security. In this segment, even before Claudine's central journey, Musil uses space and spacial imagery to indicate the intricate complexity of her relationship to this sphere of marriage and home life, and to reveal the discrepancies between the apparent harmony and unity with which Musil sets the scene and the actual underlying disharmony which is submerged but increasingly evident in Claudine.

This time, the spacial image is that of an angle, made up of the man and the woman, and Musil uses it to interject a jolting stumble into the feeling of serenity. This also marks the introduction of the ambiguity which will be so

much in evidence throughout the remainder of the story. We can interpret this angle in two ways: one, that the two are really at opposing angles to one another, and that the union is not quite as perfect as it would seem, or two, that they are two elements necessary to compliment each other to comprise the angle.

The scene could well be an impressionist painting; soft and lacking sharp corners. For this reason, the last sentence of the opening paragraph comes as a harsh surprise.

> Der Arm der Frau aber ragte von der Kanne weg, und der Blick, mit dem sie nach ihrem Manne sah, bildete mit ihm einen starren, steifen Winkel. (156)

This angle with which the woman views her husband could perhaps be construed as a bond. Musil allows this, but he is careful to specify the properties of that bond, which are by no means positive.

> Gewiss einen Winkel, wie man sehen konnte...als spannte es sich zwischen ihnen wie ein Strebe härtestem Metall und hielte sie auf ihren Plätzen fest und verbände sie doch, trotzdem sie so weit auseinander waren, zu einer Einheit, die man fast mit den Sinnen empfinden konnte.... (156)

It could be that this bond is also a burden.

This departure from the aesthetic, painting-like perfection is not long lived, for in the same paragraph, Musil returns to the soft focus and compares the couple to butterflies, "...als ob ihre Herzen wie zwei Schwärme kleiner Schmetterlinge ineinanderflatterten" (156). This could safely be called the opposite end of the spectrum

from the hard metal beam just used to describe them. Thus Musil allows the pendulum to return to the insulated serenity and continues in the description of their union.

The two people enjoy a relationship that extends beyond physical and emotional love as we understand it. They are so sensitive to each other that they are as one. Musil continues with the spacial imagery, this time choosing a sphere, calling to mind the oriental yin and yang:

> Wie zwei wunderbar aneinandergepasste Hälften, die zusammengefügt,ihre Grenze nach aussen verringern, während ihr Inneres grösser ineinanderflutet. (159)

Hence it may be observed that Musil illustrates the rift which is forming between Claudine and the environment in which she finds herself, by his shift in images between the exquisite sphere, and the harsh angles.

Musil exhibits true mastery in creating empathy with the characters. The reader is totally drawn into the feeling of unity between the two. It seems an ideal, perfect, very civilized love--but again, Musil reveals a flaw in the spacial sphere of their relationship. Claudine makes a statement, a breathless, confusing admission of her vague feelings of uneasiness. At the same time, she attempts, apologetically and fearfully to justify those feelings to her husband. In comparison to the passive, lulling comfort shown before, this scene is almost frantic.

> "Errinerst du dich", sagte plötzlich die Frau...Und ich konnte es dir nicht sagen und musste erst über dich lächeln, weil du es nicht wusstest und mir ganz nah zu sein glaubtest, und wollte es dir dann nicht mehr sagen und wurde bös auf dich, weil du es nicht

> selbst fühltest, und deine Zärtlichkeiten fanden mich nicht mehr. (159)

She continues with similar hysterical, run-on sentences for several breathless moments, but then, almost imperceptably, the pendulum returns and the perfect union is once more in evidence:

> Sie fühlten, dass sie ohne einander nicht leben konnten und nur zusammen, wie ein kunstvoll in sich gestütztes System... (159)

The short period of hysteria is effective, for is serves as the emotional device needed to free the woman of her ties. The windows, which were likened to half-closed eyes are now opened, not just by the woman herself, but by both of them: "Dann sagten sie nichts, sondern zogen die Läden hoch und sahen auf die Strasse hinaus" (159). She is now ready to embark on a journey out of the isolated environment . This love she bears for her husband will not suffer though. This journey is meant by Claudine to "complete" her love yet further.

Claudine's journey, then, is somewhat different from Törless'. Unlike him, she does not confront a strange new sphere of existence. She has developed far beyond the stage at which Törless finds himself and, precisely because of this, she exhibits a sophistication not yet available to him. Instead, this is a re-confrontation with a situation that has been assumed conquered.

Thus she will make a journey, more specifically a return journey to Italy (a warm sultry setting, well known for its sensual, emotional conotations) where she went once

before, only to succumb to the elements of impulse and physical drives which resulted in her illicit pregnancy. This return journey should suggest to the reader that she will be exposed once more to these non-rational elements, as indeed she is, when she meets the stranger, with whom she will eventually engage in an affair prompted by purely physical desires.

Upon embarking on the journey, the woman is referred to for the first time as "Claudine." She is now an individual, rather than half of a "system": or "die Frau." The reason for this journey is to visit her daughter, who effectively represents Claudine's past.

Like Törless Claudine makes her journey by train and, like Törless', Claudine's physical journey will prove representative of her emotions and inner development. Therefore, in journeying to visit Lilli, Claudine not only travels to a small town. She also journeys backwards in her own memory and emotions. The time during which Lilli was conceived is foremost in her mind, reminding her of her emotions and feelings at that time.

Musil gives the reader a short summary of these feelings regarding her actions, but it is not safe to assume that the same feelings will re-emerge now. Her experiences have afforded her objectivity and knowledge, so that she may view what will happen differently.

Claudine journeys into an isolated environment in which she will attempt, although perhaps not always

consciously, to resolve the struggle of rational vs. non-rational. Peters offers the following description of her struggle:

> Unlike Musil's typical male protagonists she has not been striving for an ultimate synthesis between reason and emotion, science and mysticism, the masculine and the feminine. She sought, rather, to achieve a state of pure feeling in a realm that excludes alternatives and that therefore obviates the individual's need to reconcile and synthesize the dialectical perspectives.[10]

This "pure feeling" is the main bond (initially described by the angle of a metal beam) between Claudine and her husband. It is this bond which she will further complete in the course of the work. This must, however, be achieved through isolation, so that she may gain a sufficient measure of objectivity, for only through the understanding of her own personality and experiences can she attempt a completion and perfection of a union and a consequent "Vollendung der Liebe." Her journey to the town where Lilli resides provides not only physical, but also emotional isolation; her husband will be pushed from her thoughts by the memories and feelings of her past.

The process of her isolation begins at the train station. Standing in the aggressive crowd, Claudine seeks to escape, and does, by fleeing into a private space--herself.

> Sie...zuckte zusammen, wenn ihr jemand zu nahe kam, und verbarg sich hinter einer bescheidenen Miene. Und fühlte dabei heimlich entzückt, wie es schöner wurde, wenn sie nachgab und sich dieser leiser, wirren Angst uberliess. (162)

This retreat into herself introduces the bridge

to her past. She perceives a headache, "...spannte sich ...ein Kopfschmerz vor ihre Gedanken" (162). This pain which blocks her "thoughts" is described for us by Musil through the use of a cyclical imagery:

> ...was sie litt...wie von einer Krone...
>
> ...sie glaubte dabei, einen schneidenden Reif um die Stirn zu fühlen...
>
> ...und manchmal war es nur ein fernes kreisendes Singen in ihrem Kopf. (162)

Claudine is slightly puzzled about the thoughts that seem to flow through her unbidden, but suddenly it becomes clear and she makes the connection. She has experienced these feelings before in her past, and the similarities draw her further and further from her present existence.

> Denn so war es damals; ihr kam plötzlich vor, einst als sei sie lange anderswo noch nie fern gewesen. (162)

Törless, too, vaguely recalls an Italian journey in his past, when he hears music and a foreign singer in the town that he visits. In examining Musil's later works, it will emerge too, that Ketten, Homo and Ulrich also have encounters with trips to warm, earthy-emotional lands, which serve as a stark contrast to the precise, rational stereotype often called to mind by northern Germany.

Once on the train, Claudine's journey into emotions continues, and Musil's use of spacial imagery becomes more evident. Claudine looks out of her window (a favorite of Musil's images) and lets the visual effects of the landscape wash over her. This "looking outwards" serves to heighten

her awareness of barriers being lowered, doors being opened.

> ...und es war etwas Lustiges, ein Weitwerden, wie wenn sich Wände auftun, etwas Gelöstes und Entlastetes. (163)

Outside, it should be noted, the snow and ice are melting, and it is obvious that Musil means the landscape to be indicative of Claudine's emotional landscape.

> Das...Aufgelockerte, Tauende der Natur draussen --es war als hätte sich ein Druck von Claudine gehoben. (163)

The thawing which is evident in nature is indicative of the disolving of Claudines's own assumed mode of existence. "Es fiel ihr plötzlich ein, dass sie allein war" (163).

Once she has reached this point, Claudine's own explanation for making the journey is revealed. Unlike Törless, she now seems sure of her reasons; she has a definite purpose in mind, rather than experimental, oftentimes aimless wandering. Claudine is intent on making her existence as complete an experience as possible. She is not unhappy in the existence with her husband, indeed, she enjoys an obvious comfort with him. But Claudine uses her rationality and intelligence to understand that her life is by no means complete. From her point of view, the only perceptible flaw in her part of the relationship lies in the yearning for experiences passed by in her life. In embarking on her journey, she hopes to smooth away this flaw. In describing what she yearns for, Musil uses the image of an untrodden path, continuing his use of spacial

imagery;

> Es gibt so viele Fragen in dem Verhältnis zu geliebten Menschen, über die der Bau des gemeinsamen Lebens hinausgeführt werden muss, bevor sie zu Ende gedacht sind, und später lässt das Gewordene keine Kraft mehr frei, um es sich anders auch nur vorzustellen. Dann steht wohl irgendwo am Weg ein sonderbarer Pfahl, ein Gesicht, säumt ein Duft, verläuft in Gras und Steinen ein nie betretender Pfad, man weiss, man musste zurückkehren, sehen, aber alles drängt vorwärts, nur wie Spinnwebenfäden, Träume.... (163)

Perhaps she believes that she can experience what she feels might have been, by taking this "other path".

Musil continues with Claudine's "path"--that is, her trip--and further presents us with image upon image of opening doors, windows, or barriers being disolved.

> ...es war, wie wenn man eine Tür, deren man sich nie anders als geschlossen entsinnt, einmal offen findet. (163)

> ...als hätte man heimlich etwas lang Geschlossenes in ihr zersprengt. (163)

Claudine continues on her journey through emotion, to a point where enough doors have been opened, so that she perceives a feeling of weightlessness, a neutrality from which she can step into the next level, an identity which is hers alone, and private.

> Ihre Gedanken fühlten die Menschen so gross und laut und sicher werden, und sie schlüpfte davor in sich hinein und hatte nichts als ihr Nichtsein, ihre Schwerlosigkeit, ein Treiben auf irgend etwas. (167)

At this point, Musil again employs his technique of sharp changes. From "draussen tobte lautlos die Landschaft", he goes to:

> Und allmählich begann der Zug ganz still in weichen,

> langen Schwingungen...zu fahren...in dunklen, grauen Vorhängen von langsam dahintreibenden Flocken auf der Erde zu schleifen. (167)

This rocking, lulling paragraph softens all edges of the physical ambience, and it should be noted that Musil resorts again to the pendular spacial image to achieve this effect. More of the same:

> In den Wagen wurde es dämmrig...die Umrisse ihrer Mitreisenden schwankten langsam und unwirklich hin und her. (167)

So also does Claudine's spinning emotional turmoil subside, and it is interesting that it does so only when the image of her husband recedes, thus dispelling one of the conflicting forces. She tries to envision him, but finds that his image is like a room "mit lang geschlossenen Fenstern" (167) --another spacial image. She is now truly free to act and perceive as an individual, not as part of the unit of their marriage, and continues on her "path."

> Ihre Gedanken wanderten langsam draussen in den Schnee hinein, ohne zurückzusehen, immer weiter und weiter. (168)

Yet another of Musil's geometric, very balanced patterns of a journey emerges, this one within the duration of the train trip itself. As mentioned before, it can be recognized that this trip is a journey not only through a "real" landscape, but also through an inner landscape of emotions and thoughts. Claudine, alone at first just physically, retains a bond with her husband in the spiritual sense. She is with him and feels his thoughts within her. But as she retreats into herself and journies backwards into

emotions of her past, the images of her husband recede. This takes place in the presence of a thawing landscape, which would indicate that her rational identity, the one which her husband knows her to possess, is also dissolving.

After becoming aware of the feeling of weightlessness and neutrality, and after the perception of an individual identity, Claudine sees that the train is now passing through a freezing landscape, which corresponds to the inner "geling," the emergence and formation of a new Claudine, open to interaction with the elements of the non-rational environment. This imagery of hot/cold, freezing/thawing will continue throughout the work, each time signifying a swaying within Claudine, as first the realm of pure instinct and emotion, the rational intellect take the upper hand within her.

It can be observed then that within the space of the train journey, she experiences an inner escape from routine normality. She is isolated as her thoughts "fly out the window," and she progresses from being physically alone and frightened to being spiritually alone and secure in the search for an identity. Only now will she prove ready for her interaction with the stranger. When she completes the re-acquisition of her own private self, he is there.

Again, Musil employs the door image; this time a portal is being opened into Claudine's existence.

> Es war, wie wenn einer angepocht hat...sie fühlte nur...dass jetzt etwas begann wirklich zu werden. (168)

Once at the station, ready to embark on the last leg of her journey, Claudine's instinctive attempt at reason and contemplation is undermined.

> Als Claudine wieder zu überlegen began, fand sie sich schon mit vier anderen Menschen in einem der kleinen Gefährte. (168)

Once again, Musil introduces a journey, continuing Claudine's flight into isolation. The sleigh ride is likened to a dark passage: "in einem dunklen Gang, der gegen ein Ziel zu immer enger wurde" (168). Servranckx says of movement:

> Wieder ist also die sichtbare Bewegung gleichlaufend mit der eigentlich gemeinten inneren, "die Landschaft" ist eine Landschaft der Seele;...sie reist auch auf den schicksalhaften Augenblick zu, in dem sich ihre Vergangenheit in einer neuen Beleuchtung einer möglichen Zukunft zuwenden wird.

During this trip, the man plays an important role. First, it is noted that his presence would seem to dispell rational thinking: "Er versperrte ihren Gedanken den Weg" (169). Next, Musil connects the door image with him:

> Wie wenn ein Tor zugefallen wäre, fand plötzlich jeder Blick seine dunkle Figur. (169)

At the hotel, these images continue. At night she is awakened suddenly to find that it is snowing heavily outside. Her lack of carefully reasoned thought is evident again.

> Dunkel kam ihr dabei vor, dass sie ihre nackten Füsse wie ein Tier auf den Boden setzte. Dann starrte sie, nah und stumpf, in das dicke Gegitter der Flocken....und es war noch etwas sonderbares in dieser Enge, wie ein Käfig.... (171)

She now experiences the beginnings of basic, very

natural animalistic emotions, a considerable swing from the life she led with her husband. These emotions are important. But are they locked in, or shut out? Unaccustomed as she is to raw instincts, she feels claustrophobic and frightened for some time.

> Sie hatte leise schreien mögen, wie Katzen schrein vor Angst und Begierde. Und plötzlich dachte sie: wenn er nun käme und einfach zu tun versuchte, was er doch sicher wollte. (172)

This claustrophobia is yet another example of Musil's collection of spacial imagery. It is not so much the actual emotion that frightens Claudine; it is the shock she feels at experiencing it. It indicates a lack of control over her "self," which both surprises and frightens her. Where, until now, Musil's use of spacial imagery has suggested a looking outward, or moving forward through windows, portals or doors, the spacial images now suggest a constricting, confining almost stifling environment for Claudine.[12]

The images are described at first through natural phenomenon:

> "Wir werden eingeschneit werden" (169)
>
> ...es schneite, weich und schwer stand es in der Luft. (171)
>
> ...das dicke Gegitter der Flocken." (171)

and later through the image of the room itself:

> Eng lag das Zimmer hinter ihr...es war noch etwas Sonderbares in dieser Enge, wie ein Käfig... (171)
>
> ...peitschengerade, schweigsame Enge. (172)

But the imagery which illuminates Claudine's frustration, confusion and later almost terror are not

confined to concrete spacial imagery. Very subtly, Musil intertwines more and more references to the stranger and her thoughts of him with this strange sense of confinement. Indeed, it becomes obvious that this experience with the emotional realm is in several ways connected with her thoughts and fantasies concerning the dark stranger:

> ...wenn er nun käme... (172)
>
> Dann machte sie den Versuch, sich den Menschen vorzustellen... (172)

It could be said, then, that her frightening feeling of being caged-in stems very much from the battle within herself of the purely emotional which draws her to the man, and the logical and intellectual with which she regards what is happening to her and forms opinions.

At this point Claudine realizes the duality or ambiguity within herself between emotion and logic:

> ...sie fühlte bloss den vorsichtig, vorgedehnten tierhaften Schritt ihrer Gedanken. (172)
>
> Nur zuweilen sah sie etwas von ihm wie es in Wirklichkeit war. (172)

More contradictions occur when she feels a "scorching cold" when thinking of him (172). Although Claudine undergoes these strong animalistic emotions and instincts, she is never completely under their control. There is always evidence of the presence of at least a vestige of rational thought. She is always "conscious" of what she perceives, whether it lies within the rationality she has taught herself to employ, or the emotional realm she once experienced, but left behind.

Never is she so swept away that she totally ceases to think. As a matter of fact, it is a faint song or echo from her routine existence that she hears within the isolated enclosure of her room (so both influences are working on her) that directly precedes an important realization.

> ...über Grenzen verwehten, fremdher wie Sternlicht flackerte Musik...weit über alles Wohnland der Seelen hinaus. (173)

Alone in her room, Claudine's realization of her feeling these raw, instinctive emotions is evident. She also becomes aware of what role this subjugation to the other sphere will play.

> Und doch begriff sie dunkel...eine feinzahnige wilde, preisgegebene Seligkeit, sie zu sein, Mensch. (173)
>
> ...und während sie ihr Herz schlagen fühlte, als truge sie ein Tier in der Brust. (173)
>
> ...da fühlte sie, dass hier sich etwas vollenden sollte. (173)

Thus it is clear that the panic within her has subsided, through the underlying presence of her rationality. She herself sees that something is about to precipitate, and will indeed be completed here. This precisely was her goal in undertaking the journey.

Claudine also experiences a further realization of purpose. She sees now that she is searching for:

> ...seine Vollendung suchendes Teil einer Liebe...für die es in der Sprache des Tags und des harten, aufrechten Ganges noch kein Wort gab. (174)

Consequently, there is contact once more with the realm of the non-spoken, the "pre-verbal." There is no

terminology contrived by man in his "aufrechten Gang" of intellectuality which denotes what will happen here for Claudine. It is certain however, that her experiences will be heavily influenced by something in the realm of the non-rational.

On the next day, Claudine continues with her introspection. She examines her reflection in a small mirror (which can be construed as a "window" into herself) only to find that the reflection is blurred and hazy, suggesting that her identity is not yet clear to her. She attempts a letter to her husband, but tears it up, re-establishing her isolation from him.

From here on, the concept of the pendulum, that is, Claudine's fluctuations between spheres of existence, will be alluded to often, and described in a variety of spacial images.

Claudine passes the time wandering back and forth and around the small town, Musil's metaphors further describing her emotional swing back and forth, between "hot" and "cold" emotions.

> ...fieberhaft leeren Weite...die Luft war klar und trocken... (hot)
>
> ...glitzernde Plättchen... (cold)
>
> ...eine Hauswand rosa rot aufleuchten...Es war etwas wie Feuer in ihr... (hot) (176)

The spacial imagery continues. Claudine is subjected to constant, very regular pendulum-swings, first to the one side of rational, logical intellect, then through a personal

inner conflict (resolved by gradual synthesis of the two forces) and into the other side of pure emotion, only to be swung back again. The pendulum situation culminates, of course, with the decision to have the affair with the stranger, but again only after she tries to analyse rationally (using the theory of random possibility) the connotations of what seem to her animalistic actions.

> Sie begriff...dass bei ihm wirklich werden sollte was hier noch ein Spiel mit Möglichkeiten war....soll ich Sodomie treiben?...ich unter diesem Tier? (180)

Her first interaction with the stranger is completely verbal, a relationship based on the spoken word. But this medium fails her; she speaks a lie for what seems to her one of the only times in her life. The lie furthermore concerns her love for her husband: "Nein, nein, ich liebe ihn ja gar nicht" (187), and thus begins yet another swing to the opposite extreme.

When, at night, she returns to her room (which has already been shown to be representative of her own physical/emotional isolation), she hears the stranger pause outside her door, which is locked from the inside--another indication of self-imposed isolation. Here she undergoes the most dramatic feelings of pure animal emotion yet:

> Da packte sie eine Lust, sich auf diesen Teppich zu werfen, die ekligen Spuren dieser Füsse zu küssen und wie eine schnuppernde Hündin sich an ihnen zu erregen...Sie kniete sich plötzlich zur Erde...ihre Hände starrten einander wie zwei fünffach gegliederte Tiere an. (189)

Again, just as quickly, she is torn from this; the pendulum

moves faster, more frantically. "Sie richtete sich langsam auf den Knien empor...Und versuchte es auszudenken" (189). At this point, the objective reader knows that Claudine is exhausted. But only after this pendulum-like swinging has drained and somehow cleansed her of all assumed emotions and feelings can she find peace. She acts now directly from the core of her being; the "Ich-gefühl" is established; she has the necessary strength.

Like Törless' revelation with the infinity he perceives in the sky, Claudine too finds release, peace and, ultimately, a solution. As can be expected by now, Musil describes this release through spacial imagery:

> Und dann kam die Ruhe, die Weite. Das Hereinströmen der schmerzhaft gestauten Kräfte nach dem Durchbrechen der Wände. Wie ein glänzend stiller Wasserspiegel lag ihr Leben Vergangenheit und Zukunft in der Höhe des Augenblicks. (190)

By means of her physical journey away from the the routine, her isolation, and later too, by means of the cyclical and pendulum-like vehicles, Musil exposes Claudine to all possible degrees of the arc between reason and emotion. From these, she gleans the understanding so vital to her urgent search for the "ich"(or, as she terms it in her discussions with herself, the "du"). And with this discovery of the "ich/du" Claudine finally, with almost painful relief, completes the love, shown through the now familiar imagery:

> Und es kam ein Augenblick, des Sich Schliessens und alles Fremde aus Sich Ausschliessen, und in einer halb schon träumenden Vollendung eine grosse, ganz rein sie enthaltende Liebe. (191)

...so schlief sie ein, ruhig, bei offener Tür. (191)

No longer must she impose the isolation upon herself; there is no need now. Consequently, in the final scene of the novella, a portion of the comsumation of the complicated affair can be witnessed. While shedding their clothes, the man (long since having been connected with the emotional side of the pendulum) bids her "Oh, schweig" (193)--he does not favor the need for words, or terminology. More important is the fact that she can: that is, she does not find it necessary to find the words that would indicate dependence on the rational. With her newly acquired knowledge, her capacity for acceptance is far expanded. It would seem that this is almost visible, for her lover notices, and says, "Endlich, endlich...sagst du Du" (193), symbolising that she has indeed found the "ich/du".

Thus the affair becomes possible. It will not impose upon, or injure the love she has with her husband. Musil has illustrated, through the ever-present, skillfully employed vehicle of overt, physical moves, and his use of the ambiguous, that, in spite of and because of the affair and Claudine's experience with both realms, she has perfected and completed herself and the love.

II. Versuchung der stillen Veronika

Where in Vollendung der Liebe Musil provided the reader with at least a basic framework or plot to follow, making it somewhat less difficult to grasp the ideas put forth in the story, in Versuchung der stillen Veronika he offers little more than a stream of conciousness. There is almost no actual action in the story, apart from the obscure wafting and gliding Musil employs to bring the characters into contact, and therefore very little from which the reader can take direction. The reader, says Peters,

> is left only with the impression that he has haphazardly overheard bits and pieces of two ever continuing and never fully expressed monologues that exist far removed from daily reality and from patterns of thought and feeling that can be articulated in language.[13]

Of all Musil's work, this very difficult piece has attracted the least attention from critics. Upon attempting to read the story, the reasons are readily evident, for not only is the subject matter "of a decidedly repulsive nature,"[14] the style is difficult as well.

It is this writer's opinion that Musil once again deals with the theme of the protagonist's search for self, and also to some extent the conflict between the opposing realms of rational--that is: pure logic, the high level of human thought and reasoning--and the purely physical, irrational and natural. The possible synthesis of the two worlds is

not stressed here, as it is in the previous works. Here, the more complex concept of amelioration through a careful balance is stressed, as Musil develops and expands his more sophisticated pendulum image; a journey into an unfamiliar sphere, and a return from it; a measured swing from one realm into the other.

Versuchung der stillen Veronika can be understood more easily if it is kept in mind that this is not a separate unit. It comprises the second half of the Vereinigungen piece and can be viewed as almost a blurry, distorted mirror image of Vollendung der Liebe. Ther is a distinct contrast in the lines of motion: Claudine journeys outwards --Veronika retreats. Together, these line of motion form the pendular image which Musil will continue to develop in his later trilogy and in Mann ohne Eigenschaften.

Although this is an extreme deviation from what is obviously Musil's "usual style," there are some elements in which he remains constant. Like the other works, it depicts an individual's struggle with the conflict between rational and non-rational elements. As in other works, this struggle takes place in an isolated location, and it (along with the characters' thoughts and emotions regarding it) is illuminated through the use of spacial imagery.

The story centres almost exclusively in two characters; Veronika and Johannes, a visiting (probably distant) relative. Much like Musil's other protagonists, both of these characters experience a search for "self" and

definable identity.

These "quests," their settings and their results are described through images of light and space. Veronika and the environment connected with her (the large old house) are always described with the help of metaphors alluding to darkness, covers and confinement. Johannes, on the other hand, is portrayed with light and doorways. He will be successful because of his ability for movement, for a journey away from the confining space of the house. Veronika will not, and this may be attributed to her lack of mobility.

To simplify discussion of this complex work, the axis around which the discussion will revolve will be Veronika's and Johannes' quests. The fact that Johannes moves and finds a purpose for himself, and Veronika (remaining static) emerges frustrated and ready to repeat her strange plan for completeness of self yet again, reveals much with regard to Musil's ideas concerning character development and survival. It will be seen here and in the trilogy to come (as was seen in Törless and Vollendung der Liebe) that for the character in search of self, mobility is crucial.

Veronika's search for an identity calls to mind the underwater sphere of existence referred to in the Maeterlinck quote at the beginning of Törless. The direction she takes to find herself is inwards; she searches for and exists in an environment beneath the surface of reality.

Johannes, on the other hand, looks outwards and upwards for a direction to life. He has a strong will to believe in a higher plane of existence, and perceives God (or what he thinks is God) in many things around him. He searches for a centre around which his existence can revolve:

> "Kreisendes," flehte Johannes,..."dass du ein Kleid hättest, an dessen Falten ich dich halten könnte...Dass ich sagen könnte: du bist Gott..."...und einmal hatte er zu Veronika gesagt: es ist Gott; er war furchtsam und fromm, es war lange her und war sein erster Versuch, das Unbestimmbare, das sie beide fühlten, fest zu machen. (195)

He will find his place in the "surface" of reality and the outside world.

Although their quests are quite different, almost diametrically opposed, Veronika and Johannes are tied together to some extent because each believes the other is a part of his/her "solution" to the problem of existence. Johannes wants Veronika as his lover and wife, so that they can begin a new life together after leaving this environment. Veronika seeks a pure, higher love, a coupling of spirits, and for this she wishes Johannes' death.

The characters are placed in the setting of a vacuum-like isolation, in a dark house:

> ...und wie ein grosser Hohlraum stand das leere dunkele Haus plötzlich über sie gestülpt. (199,pp. 195-196 passim.)

In addition to the isolated setting of the house, it can be observed that the characters themselves are isolated within it--within their own spheres of existence and their own personal quests. What interactions they have, when they do meet in attempts to realize their goals, are only in the form of speech. Even then, their conversations are largely one-sided; their words are spoken more for their own

benefit, rather than to each other. These conversations are punctuated by long silences; inabilities to move freely even in the verbal realm.

> Veronika schluckte nach Worten und wieder entstand ein Schweigen.
>
> ...und wieder danach dieses Schweigen... (197)

Within this dark, isolated setting then, Veronika pursues her goal. She searches for a perfect love, but she has a conception of love that is difficult to define. The love she seeks must be "pure," and by this she means undefiled by the physical. To succumb to the latter is akin to sodomy (in her view) and she sees all such physical impulses as animalistic. She does experience the physical sense of arousal when she finds herself close to either Johannes or Demeter, the other man living in the house, but does not understand or accept them, and can only think of animals.

> ...Demeter musste so sein wie der Hahn... (197)
>
> ...du bist das Tier. (198)
>
> ...ein Hineingeschlucktwerden wie von einem trinkenden Tier. (201)
>
> ...so unpersonlich konnte uberhaupt kein Mensch sein, konnte nur ein Tier...Hilf mir doch, warum kann ich immer dabei nur an ein Tier denken? (202)

The reason for this fear and disgust regarding sexual intimacy or even physical touching lies in Veronika's suppressed guilt about her encounter (during the time of her puberty) with her St. Bernard dog. She therefore associates sexual arousal with animals:

> Und da war sie so eigentümlich gelähmt gewesen, wie...wie wenn sie selbst ein Tier ware, und trotz der abscheulichen Angst, die sie empfand, duckte sich etwas ganz heiss in ihr zusammen... (205)

Consequently, for her, the ultimate, civilized and perfect love can be attained only if the physical aspects of love are surmounted, surpassed, and only the touching of souls and spirits is involved.

Veronika actually conceives of a plan to realize this perfect love. She desires Johannes' spirit, free from the threatening aspect of his physical body. She sees his dedication to her, and the weakness his own struggle places upon him, and actually suggests to him in the conversation where they both finally conflict and make demands of each other: "...ja, vielleicht wenn du sterben müsstest..."(202), thus almost demanding his death.

Johannes is a young man with "normal" questions of life, and the usual varied phases of beliefs. He has considered the priesthood in his search for direction in life, and believes in a higher, determining force that moulds his fate. This rather romantic idea is rejected with time, and his attempts are now centered around persuading Veronika to leave the gloomy depths of the house and experience the "surface" of reality with him. He is unsuccessful: "Dreimal sagte sie ...nein" (203).

In the emotionally weakened state in which his own turmoil has left him, Johannes almost accepts Veronika's proposition after she rejects his, determined as he is to win her favour. In this, "her" environment, he is

her way of thinking: "Ich gehe fort; gewiss, vielleicht werde ich sterben," he says (203). As will be seen, it is the trip, spurred by this motive (to gain Veronika's favour) that will save his life, and give him purpose.

After the idea of the journey has been broached, Musil's use of spacial imagery becomes more readily apparent. Veronika examines her inner emotions as if they were a concrete, physical thing:

> ...sie hatte ein unklares, fliessendes Gefühl von sich selbst, und wenn sie sich innerlich betastete, fand sie nur..verhüllte Formen. (207)

As befits her characterizing element of darkness, Veronika herself is often described as shrouded or enveloped by a loose cover, or blanket; that is, an object with no real depth, and only two dimensions, and yet possessing the capacity for shutting out light. Thus there is a vast complexity, but it exists <u>under</u> the surface:

> ...und wenn sie sich errinnerte, wie sie sich selbst...spürte...war das früher wie ein runder, gespannter Wassertropfen, und jetzt längst wie eine kleine, weichgerandete Lache; ganz breit und schlaff und spannungslos. (206)

> ...es war wie wenn sie unter einem weichen Tuch lebte. (207)

> ...wie wenn man unter einer Decke etwas sich bewegen fühlt, ohne den Sinn zu erraten. (207)

> ...es musste bloss irgendwas einmal gewesen sein, dass sie dem Leben näher stand...und hatte nur gewusst, dass seither etwas gekommen sein musste, was sie verdeckte. (206)

Enshrouded by loneliness, Veronika has made an almost vaccuum-like existence for herself:

> Es blieb ein leerer, ungeheuerer Raum dazwischen und in diesem lebte ihr Körper.
>
> ...unter einer Glocke von dünngeschliffenem Horn. (207)

Veronika does make one small journey during the course of the story; she accompanies Johannes on his trip to the train station from which he will depart, presumably to commit suicide (for her benefit)near the ocean:

> ...es war plötzlich so fest, dass sie sich wie ein Messe in dem Leben dieses anderen Menschen fühlte...er ging und würde sich töten, sie prüfte es nicht... (212)

Just a short time outside of the house is enough for her to experience a revelation:

> ...und mit zwischen ihnen den letzten Weg ging, war es geschehen, dass plötzlich, mit voller Bestimmtheit in Veronika auch diese verlorenste Erinnerung emporsprang. (209)

The journey also serves to help her recognize that, with Johannes' departure, her only connections to reality are severed, and that she has crossed a threshold.

> ...sie empfand, dass in diesem Augenblicke das wirkliche Erlebnis, das Erlebnis an den wirklichen Johannes, seinen Scheitelpunkt überschritten hatte, und beendet war. Sie hatte in diesem Augenblick ein Gefühl wie ein Auseinanderfallen. (209)

Once outside of the house, her vision seems clearer; she is suddenly able to perceive things more accurately. She is so unaccustomed to the non-reality of the house that this seems strange to her:

> Veronika sah nach den Bäumen, seitlich ihres Wegs, sie standen gerader und aufrechter als ihr natürlich geschienen hätte. (209)

This break-off with the "real" Johannes, is exactly what

Veronika wants. Johannes is her last tie to reality, and it is precisely this reality which weighs her down, and seems too much of a burden to her. It is therefore shunned and avoided.

From here on, the story centres almost entirely on Veronika's retreat, which conversely parallels Claudine's journey outwards. Where Claudine left the masculine influence in her life to journey away from her day-to-day existence, Veronika wants nothing more than to retreat back to what she knows and is accustomed to. She takes refuge in the darkness and confinement of the gloomy house and its dimly lit rooms, much in the same way Törless did in his escapes to the red chamber. In the Drei Frauen trilogy, Homo and Tonka too will journey further and further into confinement. For these two characters, confinement will lead to eventual death. Veronika's case is similar. Although she may not actually die, her character is stifled to such an extent that no positive development and progression is possible. This adherence to one extreme labels her as one of Musil's inflexible characters.

Once Johannes is gone and Veronika makes the return trip to the house alone, she feels almost reborn. It is noteworthy that the metaphor used to describe this is the phoenix image, a cyclical one, which foreshadows the fact that she will die (if only symbolically) again:

> Wie aus einer zerbrochen am Boden liegenden Hülle war ihr aus diesem Abschied ein Gefühl von sich emporgestiegen. (212)

This euphoria comes from the fact that she is confident that Johannes is going in order to commit suicide--she will be freed of the physical threat he imposes, and free to unite with his spirit.

> ...er ging und würde sich töten...ihr war, als sähe sie körperlich in der Luft, wie die Beziehung ihrer Seele zu dieser anderen Seele zu etwas Letztem, Unabänderlichen geworden war, das wie ein Aststumpf in die Ewigket ragte.
>
> Und allmählich begann eine seltsame Lust Veronika zu tragen....Es war ihr fast übel vor Glück. (pp. 212-213)

She is not confident until she is safely back in her own environment, illuminated through Musil's use of spacial imagery:

> Diese Spannung wich erst von ihr, als sie die Hand auf das Tor ihres Hauses legte...als sie es schloss...sie stand im Dunkel, wie in einem stillen, unterirdischem Wasser...sie wusste dass sie bei sich war. (213)

Thus Musil alludes once again to the opening quote from Törless; Veronika does indeed represent the underwater sphere.

During the night in which she believes Johannes to have killed himself, Veronika readies herself for her union of spirits. Again the image of a blanket covering her is used.

> ...ein Gefühl des Geheimnisses legte sich langsam in vielen Falten über Veronika. (214)

Since a communion with Johannes' spirit is her goal, her thoughts are naturally on him. She lights every light (Johannes' symbol) in her room, so that she is immersed in his element. For a long time she drifts in and out of

sleep, her thoughts wandering at random. At the end of her meditation, she really believes she is close to him:

> Ihr war dann, als fühlte sie Johannes ganz nahe bei sich, so nahe wie sich selbst. (217)

This is important, because it is herself ("sich selbst"), and only that which she feels. Her thoughts and imagination, the powers of her own mind are really very vast. When she awakens, however, she is almost completely back in her own element: "Es war kühl um sie" (217). All of the candles but one have extinguished themselves:

> ...die Kerzen waren herabgebrannt und nur eine letzte leuchtete noch; auf dem Platz wo Johannes gesessen hatte war jetzt ein Loch im Raum, das all ihre Gedanken nicht füllen konnten. (217)

This suggests that Johannes, along with his representative element of light, are a door for Veronika, reminding her that she can leave the darkness and take up residence in reality. It also makes a statement about how very temporary the experience (one which she thought would be all-encompassing and infinite) really is. Her thoughts have only so much power--they cannot continue to fill the "hole" that Johannes has left.

Veronika does not grasp at this last symbolic opportunity to live a normal life. Johannes' element expires, the opening to the passage to his life dissappears, and her own element returns to enfold her:

> Und plötzlich verlosch lautlos auch dieses kleine Licht, wie ein letzter Weggehender leise die Türe schliesst; Veronika blieb im Dunkel. (217)

Veronika is not as content as can be expected at being left

in her darkness. The experience she so looked forward to has not gone according to her expectations, and she is frightened by what was once her own element:

> Sie ängstigte sich bereits wieder in diesem fremden sie umschliessenden Dasein. (218)

Searching again for her identity, she fails:

> Veronikas Blick suchte unwillkührlich den Platz wo an der Wand der Spiegel hing, und fand ihr Bild nicht; sie sah nichts. (218)

This suggests that, in order to find her identity, Veronika is in need of the light (Johannes) that she has just allowed to expire. Without light, she cannot see her reflection, and consequently not recognize her "self" either.

The image of water, which Veronika once welcomed as a comfort, now also takes on a less positive connotation:

> Die Finsterniss füllte das Haus wie eine schwere Flüssigkeit. (218)

As daylight, symbolic of Johannes, approaches, Veronika becomes even more confused:

> Und je heller es wurde, desto unwahrscheinlicher erschien ihr, dass Johannes tot sei. (220)

And yet, now, after this night of almost delirious thoughts, Veronika finally perceives her sought-after unity.

> Sie empfand eine wollustige Weichheit und ein ungeheures Nahesein. Mehr noch als eine des Körpers, eine der Seele...es erschien ihr wie eine geheimnissvolle geistige Vereinigung. (220)

This union is, however, with the soul of a <u>living</u> person, not with someone who has died. The very fact that Veronika feels this overpowering sensation of unity says much regarding the strength and power of her thoughts. In

this self-imposed vaccuum of an environment, she is in less "danger" from physical stimuli and, therefore, her mind has compensated. Her thoughts are a very powerful substitute for the "real" thing.

As daylight (Johannes' element) finally comes, it is evident that Veronika's feeling that Johannes still lives is indeed true. The news is almost explosive, nonetheless, forcing its way into Veronika's darkness.

> Und als es ganz klar, und bleich und Tag geworden war, kam der Brief...Es pochte am Haus und riss durch die Stille, wie ein Felsblock eine dünne Schneedecke zerschlägt; durch das geöffnete Tor bliesen Wind und Helligkeit herein.

In this segment Musil once again uses the image of a blanket (this time a cold one of snow) to represent Veronika's protective cover of seclusion. Johannes' feeling of life is so strong that it forces itself into the house, tearing the blanket that covers Veronika. This statement is a strong reaffirmation of the physical; it confirms the sexual connotations that have been subtly illuminated in Veronika's previous "union" scene. This scene with its suggestion of tearing the thin blanket, and the explanation made by Johannes with reference to a "Pfahl" being rammed into the earth and taking life, strongly suggests rape.

> ...ich bin davon wie ein Pfahl gefasst und verammt und wieder verwurzelt worden... (221)

Among other things, Johannes substantiates that argument that the house is confining and restricting; that escape is life for him. "Ich fand auf die Strasse," he says (221), indicating that he has found his way out of the darkness

onto the path of reality.

The realization of this escape is painful to Veronika. It seems to her that the energy and effort that went into this experience, and the heightened sensitivity and feelings that come out of it, were all in vain.

> Es war endgültig alles um solch einen geschehen, der nun ernüchtert zusah. (221)

But in spite of her disappointment, she has experienced a union. She has indeed allowed herself to experience the emotion she had stifled for so long. This "Fernliebe," a favorite of Musil's themes,[15] is what Veronika perceives as reality, and the reader is left little choice but to doubt that she will ever even want to experience a "normal" affair, complete with physical intimacy. She is aroused only by the "thought," allowing nothing but her mind (unsullied by the physical) to arouse her. The very thought of being so close, and yet not touching a man excites her. She is confident in the protection that the house affords her, and can therefore find pleasure in such things as this:

> Sie schlich manchmal bis an die verschlossene Haustür und lauschte, bis sie einen Mann vorübergehen hörte. Die Vorstellung dass sie dort stand, im blossen Hemd, fast nackt und unten offen, während draussen einer vorbeiging, so nah und nur durch ein Brett getrennt, bog sie fast zusammen. (222)

It is conceivable (after reading the final paragraph) that Veronika will attempt a similar "affair" with Demeter, although this is not certain. What can be assumed, however, is that Veronika, tied to her environment by her own desire,

will remain in the gloom of the house and eventually meet with an end similar to her aunt's--old and alone in endless gloom. This immobility assures that she develops no further, as can be seen from the suggestion that she might repeat the cycle again with Demeter. The power of her mind may be great, but it is finite, and cannot provide a complete surrogate for reality and light, both of which are necessary for her development.

Johannes, on the other hand, does find the purpose and direction he sought, and is is important that he finds it outside of the vacuum, through a journey away from its restrictions, into reality. Like the treasure brought to the surface and daylight, Johannes' life will have a "graspable" element.

Veronika and her experiences will remain in the extreme of darkness. The difference between the two young people lies in their flexibility and capacity for movement.

Musil thus makes his familiar comment with this most unusual work. Johannes and the lifestyle he represents prove that they have the capacity for movement and to reproduce themselves and survive. Veronika, in her extreme, will remain static and sterile, and thereby guarantee its demise and ultimate extinction. This idea will be further developed in Musil's Drei Frauen.

Chapter Three

Drei Frauen

The theme of journeys and departures as spacial images is doubly evident in Musil's trilogy, Drei Frauen. Not only are the emotional and inner turmoils of the protagonist in each of the stories symbolized with the help of concrete, real journeys; Musil also incorporates the idea into the very structure of the trilogy in that Die Portugiesin is a departure from the other two works which flank it. Musil's alpha and omega is the modern time period (i.e. Grigia and Tonka). In Die Portugiesin, Musil journeys to a very distant, almost mythical past. There, the hero's problems (much akin to those of the modern characters' of the first and last works) come to a positive and satisfactory conclusion. Those of the modern heros do not.

Die Portugiesin looks back through time to reveal von Ketten's successful "moves"; moves that reap him eventual physical as well as emotional development and well-being. But the trilogy starts and ends with modern day scientists, for whom "movement"and departure from their accustomed, routine lifestyle will prove a problem, if not a tragedy. For these two men, Homo and Tonka's lover, movement, or the lack of it, will destroy.

In Grigia, the protagonist will embark on a journey to

a southern land[16] which represents quite the opposite of his routine existence. As a scientist, he seeks solace in concrete words, labels and rational explanations, and is awkward and unskilled in the realms of instincts and emotion that motivate man. Here, he will meet a woman, representative of the non-rational realm. Through his relating of events within the space of the journey, Musil will reveal Homo's confrontations with the non-rational, and eventually his downfall. In Grigia, another of Musil's patterns may be observed, but this one is not symmetrical. Homo's journey will be one-way, leading him into ever more constricting areas until, ultimately unable to move at all, he dies.

In Tonka, the protagonist is more fortunate. He himself does not die. However, Tonka, who will prove symbolic of the natural, emotional elements within him, does. This time it is she who meets tragedy because she is not allowed sufficient freedom to move. In Tonka there is a similar pattern to Homo's; Tonka progresses in stages from free movement to none at all, and consequent death.

I. Grigia

In presenting yet another hero's emotional turmoil and development (whether positive or negative) through journeys and departures as images, Musil carries on the pattern established in Törless, and developed in Vereinigungen. Granted, the physical journey made by Homo is not quite as symmetric and geometrically structured as in the Törless novel. As mentioned previously, this geometric structure occurs in the trilogy as a complete unit rather than in all the separate elements themselves. However, the journey continues to be put to use by Musil here, just as in his previous works. The inner emotional movement and landscape of the character is brilliantly illuminated through the use of actual physical movement and spacial imagery. Musil thus continues in his development of a powerful, effective method of aquainting the reader with his sensitive topics.

As is the case with Törless and Vereinigungen, Grigia begins with the breaking of a family unit, signifying a break with and departure from the well-known, well-accepted mode of existence. Like the two previously discussed works, this break is initiated by the central character as a result of his own vague feelings of discontent with his particular mode of existence. Homo's feelings are as follows:

> Er empfand seinen Widerstand als eine grosse Selbstsucht, es war aber eher eine

Selbst-auflösung. (234)

It can be inferred from this that he is in need of change. This change is not by choice however. The events in his life seem to leave him no other recourse.

Homo is clearly dissatisfied with his existence in the stability of the family unit. He is aware that he does not experience the love that he should for his son, and this troubles him:

> ...aber diese Liebe war durch das Kind trennbar geworden, wie ein Stein in den Wasser gesickert ist, dass ihn immer weiter auseinander treibt. (234)

In addition, the boy is somewhat sickly, a comment on Homo's failure as a masculine figure to reproduce himself effectively, for the boy does not measure up to the ideals so strongly governing Homo himself--that is: strength, vitality, and rationality, features often attributed to the male in Musil's works.

This "self dissolution" experienced by Homo can be paralleled by Törless' perception of an "absence of self" and by Claudine's "incompleteness of self." Like Törless, Homo thus becomes vulnerable to an irrational dimension of life, from which he might otherwise be protected by way of his ties to a stable family unit (insofar as an "accepted family unit" would give him the necessary exposure to a certain degree of emotion).

As did the protagonists before him, Homo, too, makes his journey away from the well defined "normal" world by train, a powerful, surging symbol. The similarities do not

end here. Homo too, finds himself in "another world," His movements within and actions concerning this unfamiliar other world are once again indications of the central character's inner personal struggle.

At this point, it should be noted that Musil allows for a very sharp contrast between the youthful, creative, rather flexible character of Törless, and the rigid, rational Homo. For both characters, the experiments and journies into the other-worldly are a dangerous, addicting, drug-like experience. Through the vehicle of trips, they become exposed to aspects of their characters and modes of existence which were certainly present, but lay dormant until now.

The difference lies in the characters' abilities to utilize this mind-expanding drug-like experience to their advantage. Törless is, after a series of confusing, frustrating episodes, quite able to cope. He has the capability, objectivity and above all the flexibility to turn this experience into an educational, constructive one. It serves to build and strengthen his character. Johannes is also able to see the value in flexibility and a life rooted in reality. Yet Homo loses all conception of reality while within the "other world," The conflict between the natural and the rational is too much for him. Where Törless survived due to his flexibility and capacity for movement, it will be seen that Homo dies due to his lack of it. This, as mentioned before, will become the main spacial image in

this story--the fact that the characters cannot move and develop.

In this work, Musil's spacial images are more linear. He refers often to borders, edges, and opposing concepts. The town in which Homo experiences his interaction with the other realm is described as having an atmosphere, "aus Schnee und Süden gemischt" (235), thus located on a threshold or border. The small town is separated from the surrounding countryside by a "Steinbrücke." The actual reason for Homo's visit to the town, "der Saumweg, der sie hierhingeführt hatte" (236), is another linear image. Later it will be seen that this "Saumweg," the physical path into the mountain to find treasure, is closely paralleled by Homo's own path into the mountain and his eventual death.

Homo's difficulty in perception of borders and opposing concepts becomes increasingly evident:

> ...man konnte kaum unterscheiden, was noch gold gelbe Ferne des gesegneten Tieflands war, und wo schon die unsicheren Wolkenboden des Himmels begonnen hatten (236)

He does not see contrasts between:

> ...und der Mensch trug Willkommengeschenke in den Augen... (237)

and

> ...auch ein alter Bauer winkte mit der Sense wie der leibhafte Tod. (237)

and in:

> ...es gab Häuser, dis einst auf einem Hügel und jetzt am Rand eines Abgrunds standen. (237)

It is also an interesting contrast that Homo has

studied the science of the earth in his role as a geologist, but that he cannot grasp or deal with "earthyness," its primitive instincts and mannerisms. These prominent contrasts seem symbolic warnings which Homo, restricted as he is to the rational, unable to understand the language of nature, cannot heed.

Like Törless and Claudine, Homo is unwillingly attracted to this new world with its primitive nature, instinct and emotion. But, unlike Törless, he is unable to deal with it. Because he has lost his capacity for seeing contrasts, he no longer has the ability to separate one from the other, or even to recognise what is real, and this will prove fatal.

In losing his connection with reality, he also severs his tie to existence and the drive to remain living, thereby losing his fear of death as well.

> ...von diesem Tag an war er von einer Bindung befreit...eine Bindung an das Lebendigsein-wollen. (241)

During his almost "religious" experience in the forest, he recognises the mystical, even magical powers of nature, and it would seem that he chooses nature and its representatives as the source of power with which he hopes to resolve his inner conflict. Several references are made to the realm of mysticism and magic:

> ...als hätte man ihm einen Zauberring um den Kopf gelegt... (247)

> ...das alles war genau so einfach, und gerade so

verzaubert... (247)

Consequently, Homo seeks a union, in order that he may achieve the means with which to deal with his identity crisis. This union is made possible through Grigia, who incorporates raw nature itself. She is named after the cow, which would suggest fertility, femininity and in general a woman of the earth. Homo tries to justify his attraction to her:

> ...dass die Natur nichts weniger als natürlich ist, sie ist...Wahrscheinlich war es gerade das, was ihn an die Bäuerin band. (245)

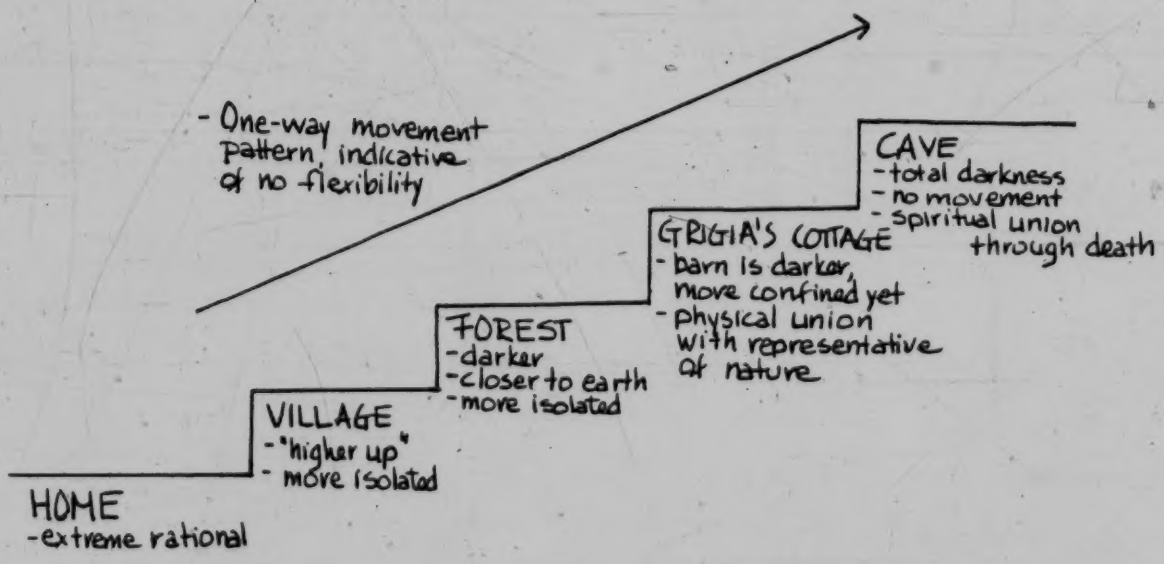
And still later:

> ...und sie hatte Zauberworte... (247)

Servranckx suggests the following:

> Agathe, Grigia, Tonka und die Portugiesin haben eine ähnliche Funktion und Wichtigkeit...Die Frau ist stets der Gegenstand des männlichen Interesses, Inhalt seiner Perspektive, Ziel seines Suchens, Geheimnis seines Lebens sie ist seine verlorene Hälfte, sein Ab-Wesen, sein Gegenpol, die "andere" Seite seines Lebens. [17]

But through his relationship with Grigia, Homo follows the path to his demise. As the "Saumweg" goes deeper and deeper into the earth and darkness, so does Homo. The diagram on the following page may help to clarify Homo's course of action:



As can be seen from the diagram, Homo makes a steady progression to spaces where he is less and less able to "move" freely, as Törless does briefly in his dark narrow passage of almost perverse sensuality. As is the case in Musil's previous work, this physical "movement" is crucial in the character's positive development, and in moving steadily to places where movement is confined (of his own free will) Homo assures himself the result of the ultimate stillness--death.

The plot of Grigia is initiated with Homo's journey to Italy, a certain indication that he is quite mobile. At this point, his character is still stable and easily

defined. But from his routine existence in a large city, he steps into a small town on a "...von der Aussenwelt getrenntes Seitental" (237). It is also physically "higher up," that is one step closer to the mystical. It is isolated by stone and mountain ranges, and it is not coincidental that these are Homo's medium.

From here, Homo progresses to Grigia's cottage, an environment even more clearly indicative of nature and the earth, and one that is even more confining than the village itself. He now shares the environment with a representative of nature itself, Grigia. These interactions place him in the position of being able to converse directly with nature, which he does in the dark, earthy confines of the forest path. Again, he is closer to nature, and in a smaller, more constricting isolation.

The images become even more evident. On his next visit to Grigia, Homo takes her to the barn. Of this, Musil says:

> Der Einfall, zusammen in den Heustall zu gehn-- man öffnet ein schweres hölzernes Tor, man zieht es zu, und bei jedem Grad, um den sich in den Angeln dreht, wächst die Finsternis, bis man am Boden eines braunen, senkrecht stehenden Dunkels hockt. (247)

Homo seems to want just this, and after this encounter, he makes the satisfied statement:"als staken seine Schuhe schon etwas im Boden" (247). This can also be construed as a clear foreshadowing of what is to come for Homo.

In the cave, where he ventures next, the "hölzernes Tor" is replaced with a stone, the hay is replaced with

earth: "noch einmal rann Grigia wie weich trockene Erde durch ihn" (251), and the semi-darkness gives way to the total blackness that Musil describes as a wall: "das Dunkel ringsrum war so dick wie eine Mauer" (251).

Sealed in the tomb of stone and earth, Homo has come to the final stage in his journey. In his quest to become one with nature, to possess some of her power, he attempts to get as close as possible to the earth. In this, his final stage, movement is impossible, and so is the continuation of his inner development and life itself. Death, the loosing of the ties that bound him to life and a concrete, real existence, is a necessary pre-requisite to his becoming involved in the less concrete, ethereal sphere from which he hoped to draw his power.

Thus Homo has made a journey into another world. His departure from the rational, normal world leaves him without a defense in the world ruled by nature, emotions and mysticism, where survival of the best-equipped applies. Those regulations plus the fact that he is too inflexible to extract himself from the extreme, ensure the fact that Homo's end is a tragic one.

Homo's journey can be seen as containing three basic parts: the first portion is his departure from the "normal" world of rationality, accepted social norms and family ties. The second is a series of steps further and further into retreat; the stages of his ever more constricted movement. Last, one may observe his final step into the retreat from

which he will not re-emerge, that is a total escape from life itself, into the spiritual by means of his suicide.

II. Die Portugiesin

In Die Portugiesin, which has already been discussed as a departure on Musil's behalf from the works which flank it, Musil continues to develop his technique of images in the spacial, physical context as indicators of the characters' inner development. The use of borders, linear and cyclical images, as well as journeys is once again in evidence; it will be observed that Musil now incorporates in this one work, all of the images developed until now.

As seen in Grigia, the absence of movement may affect the character as much as its presence. In Die Portugiesin the protagonist will be observed in a series of stages, each one more confining than the one previous. But this time, the reader will also witness a return, both to a "normal, routine" existence, as well as to the capacity for movement.

The setting of Die Portugiesin is significant. By placing von Ketten's castle on the border between north and south, Musil suggests a position for his characters that encompasses both the cold, intellectual rationalism symbolised by the north, as well as a sensuous, emotional warmth, called to mind by the south.

> ...sie waren aus dem Norden gekommen und hatten vor der Schwelle des Südens halt gemacht. (252)

Cyclical imagery is also in evidence. Servranckx

points out:

> Die Burg wird als der Mittelpunkt eines Kreises dargestellt:...der Blick "in die tiefe Rundheit es Ausblicks..." "...im weiten Umkreis" "...umkreist". 18

Ketten, the central figure, is but one "link in a chain" of von Kettens; that is, a specific, illuminated point, a life cycle within a long line of ancestry, thus the linear image is suggested once again.

Musil emphasises the isolation of the setting, clarifying that this story too will take place in an atmosphere removed from the normal:

> ...lag auf einer fast freistehenden, lotrechten Wand, ihre Burg. (252)

> Kein Schall der Welt drang von aussen in das Schloss der Catene, durch diese davorhangende Matte wilden Lärms hindurch. (252)

and finally,

> ...und fühlten sich nirgends hingehören als zu sich. (252)

Therefore it is obvious that once again, Musil uses hot/cold, north/south symbolism to represent the opposing realms of rational and non-rational, both of which are present in the castle. Von Ketten himself represents the masculine traits of a cool, intellectual, rational nature, and his lady, the warm sensual mystical aspects.

Ketten is characterised with such cyclical imagery as:

> Als scharf und aufmerksam galten alle Herren von Ketten, und kein Vorteil entging ihnen im weiten Umkreis. (255)

> ...während er umkreiste wie ein Wolf... (258)

This can be interpreted as foreshadowing that he will

complete a cycle himself. He will journey away, as well as return. The lady seems more linear. She is:"geheimnissvoll wie die vielen Perlenketten..." (254), and "...wie ein Brunnenstrahl..."(259)

In Die Portugiesin, von Ketten, unlike Homo, does not enter the "other realm" of mysticism and irrationality to wage the battle of duality within himself there. Von Ketten journeys to the south and brings the woman (who is symbolic of the other world) back with him, thereby continuing to exist and function on his own ground, enveloped by the world which upholds his masculine traits of strength, virility and aggression. It is observed, therefore, that he does not use journeys as frustrated flights from an unhappy existence. He and his lifestyle are preceded by a solid background of von Kettens who have established an accepted, admirable reputation for the men of the family.

Von Ketten makes his first journey to the south to find a beautiful woman so that he may beget beautiful children. There is no antagonism here. More important in this case, is his journey back. That is, he returns willingly with that element of mysticism, fully prepared to incorporate it into his household, and even to combine with it to the extent that some of its traits will appear in his progeny.

It is interesting, however, that he himself spends as short a time there as possible. This is very unlike Homo, who fled to the isolated world of Grigia's village, and was held there and consequently destroyed by the very strong

powers of nature and mysticism she incorporated. At the outset of each story Homo and Ketten represent two - different ways in which men with their qualities can mis-relate to that sphere of existence represented by femininity: on one hand, there is Homo's long neglect of this sphere which, once his attraction to it is awakened, leaves him a helpless victim to its intensity. On the other hand, there is Ketten's underestimation of its differentness and power, his belief that he can simply set out to get it, possess it, integrate it and be done with it.

Von Ketten himself (at least for most of the time) is in command of the isolated environment of the castle. He returns to it, leaves it, and allows elements other than his own into it, at his will.

Thus Musil's use of journeys or departures as imagery for the emotional landscape of the main character is once again in evidence. First, von Ketten makes a journey to bring closer to him that element with which he will later conflict. Second, for as long as von Ketten is afforded the opportunity to continue making journeys, remaining flexible as a result of his mobility, as long as he is safely able to depart from this isolated world of the castle, his role as the protector and virile lord of the estate can be upheld. Constant motion towards an established goal, a purpose for which he can strive, is the mainstay of his existence, both physical and emotional. He is uneasy about staying home for

any length of time, somehow sensing that this will prove to be his downfall.

> Zwei Tage später sass er wieder im Sattel. Und elf Jahre später tat er es noch...Er fürchtete sich wohl, länger zuhause zu bleiben, wie sich ein Müder nicht setzen darf. (256)

This is a positive, flexible mobility; a setting forth of masculine activity and aggressiveness, based (consciously or subconsciously) on a hesitancy or unwillingness to rest, reflect, and become "familiar with" what awaits him in his house. (Later this same unwillingness can be seen in Mann ohne Eigenschaften in Ulrich, who only in the second book, with his sister, sheds his usual, aggressive, attacking mode and sits at ease; a knight out of his armour.)

Ketten is equally unwilling to return to his castle in a weakened condition, which supports the fact that he harbors some understanding of the loss of power in the loss of mobility. This is evident from the following quotes:

> Fünf Tage nach der Kunde von seiner Verwundung kam er erst zu ihr und blieb bloss einen Tag. (256)

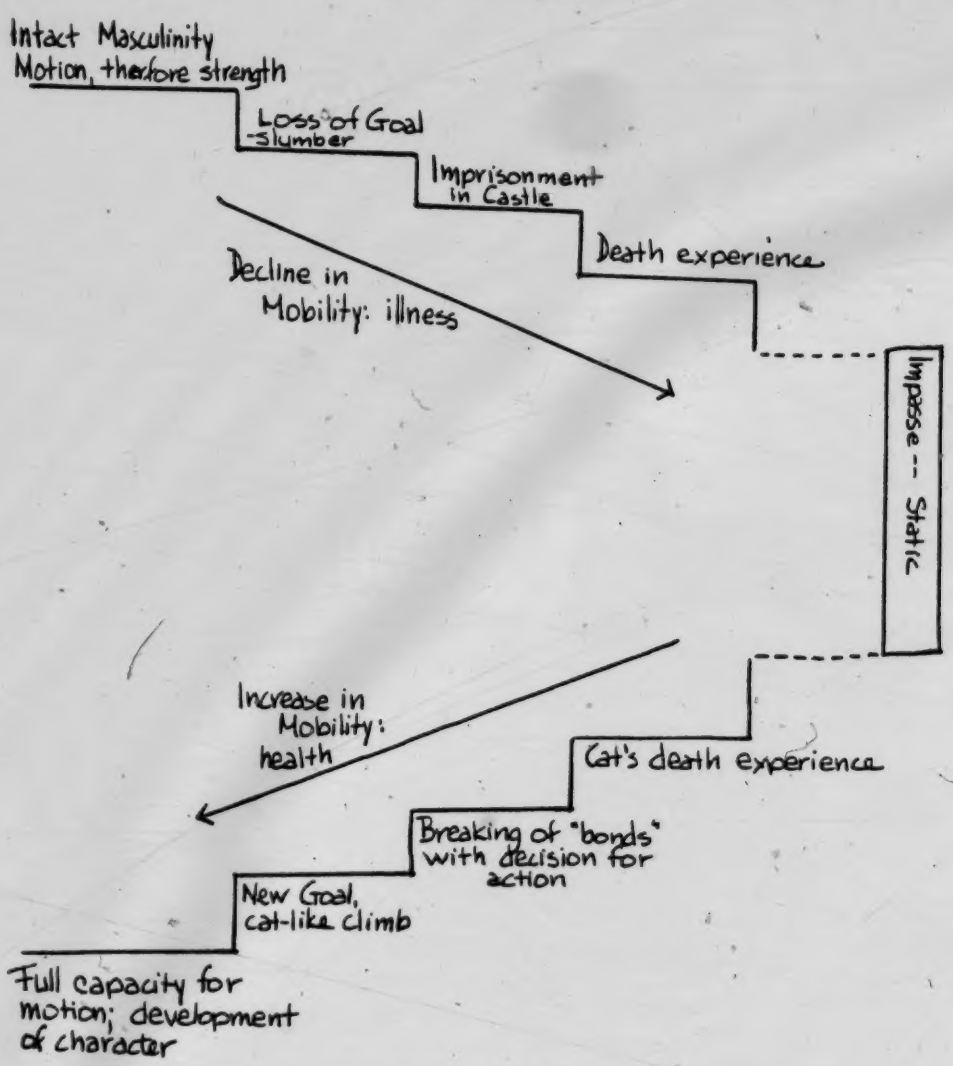
or:

> Der Herr von Ketten, am Rückzug verwundet, kehrte nicht gleich nach Hause zurück; zwei Tage lang lag er in einer Bauernhütte verborgen. (256)

His anxiety is warranted, as the reader will discover later in the story. He is afraid of any activity that would take him "out of armour," out of his usual approach.

Von Ketten's need for motion and freedom becomes obvious when his opportunity for departures is taken from him by the death of the Bishop. Perhaps it is significant

that even this is not brought about by von Ketten and a victory, but rather through what may be termed an "act of God," an intervention of a spiritual, non-rational nature, namely, his illness. This illness suggests the vulnerablity of the armoured warrior, and the abrupt end to the battles is indictive of the senselessness of his long fighting, for on his last trek homeward, von Ketten is bitten by a fly, and falls deathly ill. This proves to be the beginning of a progression of stages toward immobility, and yet another symetrical pattern, which is established in both the physical as well as emotional movement and development.



When Ketten's capacity for movement is limited, his own character is in danger of being extinguished. As long as he is able to move freely in the physical sense, his soft and vulnerable emotional side goes unnoticed. Only a decision for movement and action (one which Homo did not elect to make) will re-establish and allow further development of his character.

After being bitten by the fly, Ketten perceives a great weariness and falls into a deep, fevered sleep, from which he rouses himself with difficulty. This sleep, the first of his symbolic deaths, indicates that his life as Ketten the warrior, the aggressive protector, is being stripped away.

He is even "embalmed" by the physicians, but the symbolism suggests that he will rise again.

> Dann lag der Herr zwei Tage lang in den saugenden Krautverbänden, liess sich von Kopf bis zu den Füssen einwickeln und nach Hause schaffen. (261)

His return to the burg and continued illness place him in a situation similar to Homo's. He is now quite immobile, and (against his will) in an environment from which he cannot escape. This environment is presided over and ruled by a woman, the mystical temptress. However, in Ketten's case, the scorceress, aided by her magical powers, is there to help, not to destroy.

> ...die Portugiesin brachte ausserdem noch geheime Zeichen an Tür und Bett an. (262)

Von Ketten too undergoes a mystical, religious experience. In his weakened state, immobilized within the realm presided over now by his wife, "die mondnächtige

Zauberin," exposure to her world is inevitable. For a short while, during a critical part of his illness, he journeys entirely into the spiritual world so unfamiliar to him by means of an "out of body experience." For Ketten, the fact that this experience is so different from anything physical, as well as the fact that he recognises that it is spritual, is of utmost importance. Until now, he has known only the physical; it has been a way of life with him. The scene is very effective:

> Der Herr von Ketten und dessen mondnächtige Zauberin waren aus ihm herausgetreten und hatten sich sacht entfernt: er sah sie, doch er wusste, mit einigen grossen Sprüngen würde er sie danach einholen, nur jetzt wusste er nicht, war er schon bei ihnen oder noch hier. Dass alles...Das möchte Gott sein. (262)

It is most important to acknowledge that von Ketten's experience is peaceful, pleasant and, above all, contributing to his "reincarnation." He is nursed, fed and cared for by the mystical element, and at no time is he actually threatened by it. (This is in direct contrast to Homo's foreshadowing his death). Directly following this experience, Musil writes:

> Einmal als er aufwachte, stand der Wolf da. (262).

It is safe to imply that the wolf represents von Ketten's former identity (he has been compared to a wolf) or at least awakens in him the strength to act according to the values upon which he has based that existence and identity. This is substantiated by the fact that he has the wolf killed, an act of violence (reminiscent of his former "life") which

proves that he has not succumbed yet, and that he will return to his former healthy existence and re-establish himself as the wolf. In fact, this deed brings the lady closer to him, because he destroys the entity which she has taken as his surrogate.

Thus von Ketten embarks on his return to life from his experience with the complete "other-worldly," the realm of the spiritual, mystical. Musil therefore touches again on the importance of returns as well as departures. The significance of this theme will become increasingly evident in the last segment of the trilogy, and prove itself an integral element of Mann ohne Eigenschaften.

Throughout his illness, von Ketten demands that he be placed on a patch of grass outside the castle. This adherance to solid ground, especially as a healing factor, symbolizes the strength that von Ketten finds in the solid, the non-spiritual. Even after his spiritual experience, he insists on returning there:

> Er war noch schwach und schlief immer noch viel auf dem Grasfleck in der Sonne. (263)

The conflict he wages within himself, the question of duality confronted by all of Musil's protagonists, now begins in earnest. Having experienced the spiritual, it seems evident that he now retains some vestiges of that sphere within his own character. The young knight who visits the von Kettens can thus be considered von Ketten's alter-ego. He represents all that is demanded of the ideal knight, as does von Ketten himself, but he looks like the

Lady. In other words, the young knight represents a melding of the two worlds of spiritual and rational. Next, von Ketten finds that his head, a spacial spherical symbol of the rational and intellectual, has become smaller. This marks the very first time that he is frightened and confused; both are feelings with which he is not familiar:

> ...die Frage war damit weggeschafft, denn kann ein Schädel kleiner werden? (263)

Moreover, he feels weak and vulnerable. Musil uses the sphere-like image of two thin bowls:

> ...und wenn man ihn von innen, mit den Gedanken befühlte, so war er noch viel kleiner und wie zwei dünne aufeinandergeklappte Schälchen. (263)

The solution for Ketten at this point is not a compromise, for as long as the young friend (who represents the balance between the two spheres) remains with them in the castle Ketten is at a loss. He has reached this stage of recovery on his own power, but is unable to continue further:

> Aber in Wirklichkeit war der Herr von Ketten noch sehr schwach, and allzu langsam kehrte das Leben in ihn wieder; er konnte die zweite Stufe der Genesung nicht finden. (264)

The return journey on which he has embarked is therefore halted, and the situation reaches an impasse. This point is just half way between the point where he is bitten by the fly, and his recovery concluding the story.

If a "death experience" marked von Ketten's passage into total emotional immobility and frustration, what element in the story serves to jolt him out of the static

situation? The answer lies in the small cat who enters the castle. From the beginning, it is evident that this is no normal cat; her actions, above all her suffering, serve to elevate her and place her in an almost human position.

> Sie stand vor dem Tor als wollte sie nicht nach Katzenart über die Mauer setzen, sondern nach Menschenart Einlass. (265)

She is also referred to as a martyr (a term usually reserved for human beings) thus being elevated once again by Musil to a position higher than animal. The characters in the story are also aware that she is not a usual cat.

After describing the small creature's suffering for a full two pages, Musil allows her to die what is deemed by the characters a martyr's death. The cat has taken on the sorrow and suffering endured until now by von Ketten and, in dying, relieves him of his intense pain. Once this burden has been shed, von Ketten is suddenly able to plan once more a course of action.

Immediately after the death of the cat, there is a confrontation between von Ketten and his lady, the first real confrontation in the story:

> Sie blieben beieinander stehn, sahn nach den Hunden hinüber und fanden kein Wort...eine Kuppel von Stille war um die Beiden (269)

After this confrontation, von Ketten is able to experience the revelation that is the prerequisite for his "cure," First he makes a move of decision:

> Wenn sie ihn bis zum Abend nicht fortgeschickt hat, muss ich ihn töten. (268)

He makes this decision regarding action against the visitor

according to the values and customs with which he has existed until now. They have become as second nature to him, and his decision to kill the visitor comes almost as a reflex. However, the revelation lies in the fact that these values are no longer ascribed to by von Ketten. This is obvious, taking into account the following quote:

> Er vermochte den Entschluss nicht zu finden, der ihn sein ganzes Dasein lang spielend leicht gewesen war. Pferde satteln, Harnisch anschnallen, ein Schwert ziehen, diese Musik seines Lebens war ihm misstönend. (268)

In a time of war and conflict, von Ketten, adhering to his methods and values, had a purpose. He pursued this purpose in the manner demanded by the conditions of war, and was therefore successful and, above all, at peace with himself. Now, after war is no longer an element of his life, the old von Ketten and his values are useless. Therefore it is understandable that he falls ill and remains helpless. Von Ketten is smitten by this illness as a symbol of that which is no longer a functioning element in his environment. As a warrior, he falls rapidly from vital to obsolete.

The time that von Ketten spends in the isolated realm of the castle, and the fact that he does not die of the illness afflicting him, proves that he is one of Musil's more flexible characters. This alone assures the reader that von Ketten, like Törless, Claudine and Johannes, will survive.

Von Ketten survives because he is able to flex as is

demanded of him by the situation in which he finds himself. Having been exposed to the non-rational realm, he retains enough of its characteristics to dissolve some of the rigidity demanded of him by his own purely rational standards. The final element of his search for a new identity (an identity that will find purpose in its environment) is one that is purely and totally irrational. Also important, is the fact that it takes the form of a short journey.

He scales the castle wall. It is interesting, however, that he arrives at the irrational conclusion to undertake the task by simple, pure, logic: if the cat came into the castle in the manner that people should, then he will enter the castle in the manner suited to cats. The cat took von Ketten's place to die, and so he in turn, will assume her place, in order that she (or her actions) may be "reborn." [19]

The solution is indeed effective. Upon completion of the act, von Ketten finds that the young knight (his alter-ego) is gone. What is more, the visitor left at the rising of the moon, so it can be assumed that the lady, at all time sensitive to her husband's desires, has sent the visitor away on her own. Also, von Ketten regains the ability to move freely and in the physical sense:

> Er stoberte durch das Schloss, aber schon krachten die Dielen und Fliesen unter seinem Tritt. (269)

The statement made by the Portugese Lady upon von Ketten's appearance in her bedchamber substantiates the idea that the cat did not play an ordinary role in the plot of

the story, that she was a vital element of von Ketten's recovery and rebirth:

> "Wenn Gott Mensch werden konnte, kann er auch Katze werden", sagte die Portugiesin. (270)

The fact that von Ketten has succeeded in his quest for identity is substantiated by the image of a window and light:

> Er zog den schweren Vorhang vom Fenster zuruck, und der Vorhang des Brausens stieg auf.... (269)

The story has completed a cycle; the dense, protective curtain which characterized the Ketten castle at the beginning of the story returns.

There is evidence again, then, of Musil's skillful use of the theme of journeys and spacial imagery. Von Ketten must make journeys, departures and flights to remain functioning in his environment. When this environment of war no longer exists, von Ketten is forced to make a journey into and out of the spiritual --that is, a journey into his inner self to arrive at a method of survival within his new environment.

Like Törless and Claudine, von Ketten deals with the duality of the two spheres to which he is exposed, and he emerges from the conflict not beaten, but strengthened and able to continue.

III. Tonka

In this last segment of his trilogy, Musil once again allows the reader to witness the development of the protagonist's character with the help of spacial imagery. In this story the protagonist is (as can be expected by now) a man of science, at home in the rational world of formulas, labels, plans, and specific answers. It is interesting that this protagonist, perhaps the most obsessed yet with words, speech, the "termable", is known not by name, but simply by the masculine pronoun, "er."

In Tonka the protagonist will enter into an unusual relationship with a woman who is (as was the case in Grigia and Die Portugiesin) representative of the non-rational sphere of existence. She does not have the ability to express herself in the spoken or written media; she simply feels, and therefore exists.

Musil characterizes Tonka, moreso than the protagonist, with the aid of spacial imagery. The image of a box and confined, closed spaces is used in connection with her from start to finish.

The protagonist first sees Tonka on a walk --a small trip away from his military station which calls to mind the Törless and Bozena relationship. Tonka is framed by a doorway. This marks his entry into an existence colored by her nature, one which he will never stop attempting to

suppress and change.

As his relationship with her continues and expands he will take longer walks "out" with her; first within the walls of the town, then to the edge of the forest, until finally he moves with her to another city, entirely out of his routine existence. This last move will also herald the temporary desertion of his studies.

It will be observed that the more freedom Tonka's lover achieves, the less free she becomes. As mentioned in the introduction, this last segment of the very balanced trilogy will show the survival of the rational sphere, rather than its demise (as in Grigia), or a balance between the two (as was the case in Die Portugiesin). The protagonist's efforts to change and suppress Tonka's nature succeed, but the success is tragic in that Tonka dies due to his efforts. Yet some of her qualities will become incorporated into his existence, bringing about a synthesis of the opposing realms. He himself remains able to move at will, thus assuring his survival. But in the course of these movements, Tonka is bound and constricted more and more, until she is finally "consumed."

The protagonist's interaction and experiences with Tonka during her lifetime, as well as after her death, leave him with a character much more complete than the one introduced at the beginning of the story. He will continue with a better understanding of the natural, mystical realm that she represented, combined with a knowledge based in the

rational, logical world in which he is at home and successful. It is this type of protagonist, more sophisticated than the others, which will be seen in much more depth in Mann ohne Eigenschaften.

In Tonka there is evidence again, of Musil's images of borders, paths, doors, journeys and departures. The protagonist meets Tonka in his year of military service, a departure from his usual routine life. Musil qualifies this:

> Niemals ist man so entblösst von sich und eigenen Werken wie in dieser Zeit...Man ist ungeschützter in dieser Zeit als sonst. (270)

As mentioned, he first sees Tonka

> ...an einem Zaun gestanden damals, vor der dunkel offenen Tür eines Häuschens. (272)

With the image of the doorframe, Musil suggests that she is his entry, his doorway to the mystical non-rational realm. She is also like the mystical Portugese lady in that she is connected with the waxing and waning orb of the moon. Tonka:

> ...schien, während sie sprach, nach dem Mond zu sehen
>
> ...fühlte sich im Schutz des Mondes. (272)

Musil characterizes Tonka in considerable detail, and with the help of images now familiar. Her first duties as a child include accompanying female convicts back to prison, a repeated back and forth journey connected to a confined space.

> ...durch einen Begleiter in die Anstalt zurückgebracht werden...gewöhnlich wurde Tonka damit

beauftragt. (271)

Tonka grows up in a somewhat isolated space. Musil stresses that she lives in the back of the house, and that it was:

> ...stehen geblieben zwischen schon hoch aufgeschossenen neuen Häusern. (271)

The house has windows,"looking out" onto the world, "auf die Strasse hin" (271), and yet also, ambiguously withholding or hiding something.

> ...während vorn die fünf Fenster, vornehm verhängt, nichts...verbargen als ein anrüchiges Quartier. (271)

Tonka then, isolated to some extent from her surroundings, is still able to depart from such confinement (as can be seen by the fact that she journeys back and forth freely from her home to the prison) until her lover sees her in the doorway. Their glances meet, and Musil hints with a spacial allusion at what this relationship will bring for Tonka:

> Es war seltsam, dass ein so heiterer Blick sass wie ein Pfeil mit einem Widerhaken, und sie schien sich selbst daran wehgetan zu haben. (273)

The man takes Tonka away from this isolated area and puts her to work as a companion to his grandmother, in an atmosphere that is equally, perhaps more inhibiting. He himself describes it as an environment of "halbfinstere Zimmer, das leise Sprechen" (275). From here, he begins to make outings (or small journeys) with her. First these take place within the stone walls of the city:

> Er ging einmal mit ihr, um etwas zu besorgen ...zwischen den Mauern der Stadt... (274)

Then they progress to longer trips:

> Wieder einmal war er mit Tonka heimlich spazierengegangen, sie machten Ausflüge an dem freien Tag... (276)

Still later, he takes to the edge of the forest:

> ...ein andermal, sassen sie an einem Waldrand, und er sah bloss durch einen Spalt der Lider, sprach nichts, und hing seinen Gedanken nach. (277)

On the way back from this trip, he begins to make demands of her. "Sie mussen sich an mich gewöhnen," he says.

And so their affair begins. Throughout its duration, the protagonist is continually puzzled and almost disgusted with Tonka's inability to understand or make herself understood through the medium of words, the "speakable". The entire story is riddled with comments to this effect:

> Tonka war nicht dumm, aber etwas schien sie zu hindern, klug zu sein....er sah, dass sie mit Antworten kämpfte. (274)

> Langsam. Stockend. Die Worte verbessernd, als ob man etwas schwer zu Verstehendes begreiflich machen musste. (275)

> ...wollte er, dass sie ihm mit eigenen Worten beschreibe; und das vermochte sie nicht. (276)

He, on the other hand, is quite at home in the realm of rational terms and words:

> ...antwortete der Sohn nicht weil es ihm wichtig zu sagen dünkte, sondern weil ihm seine Redegeschicklichkeit reizte. (280)

Tonka is confined by him in his world of speech by her own inability to be mobile within it.

When the grandmother dies, and Tonka would normally be released from this confinement in a world in which she is obviously not at home and constricted, he prevents her from escaping. He observes her desperately trying to pack her

belongings into numerous boxes; they are too small, and she attempts in vain to fit everything into them. This metaphor of being too large for the boxes or space indicates that Tonka, too, has insufficient space to move freely. The door has been opened for her, but he steps into the way.

> Die Tür ihres Zimmerchens stand offen... sagte er plötzlich, "Sie sollen nicht... zurückgehen" (281)

With this statement, he commits himself to caring for Tonka and she becomes his responsibility. This marks the beginning of yet another phase in his life; he leaves his home, the routine of his studies, sharing this journey and its destination with the non-rational Tonka.

> Er legte seine Prüfungen ab, und verliess das Elternhaus....sein Weg führte ihn nach einer deutschen Grosstadt. (285)

Once in the city, Tonka accepts a position in a store, but her position is described as a somewhat static one. She makes no attempt at freeing herself from a confining position. She has lost the strength, or perhaps the desire:

> Aber warum bat sie nie um Erhöhung? (284)
>
> ...aber ebensosehr fehlte ihr jedes Streben, aus ihrem Kreis in einen höheren zu gelangen. (285)

Tonka remains pure, unmaterialistic and natural: "Sie blieb wie die Natur rein" (285), her oddness isolating her more and more. Once again, Musil chooses the enclosing image of a box to describe her.

> Und...war das wie schöne Steine, deren Namen man nicht weiss, in einem Kästchen gelegen. (285)

Later, Musil uses an image reminiscent of the metal beam used to describe Claudine's relationship to her environment and her husband:

> Seine Beziehung zu ihr war damals in einer merkwürdingen Spannung. (285)

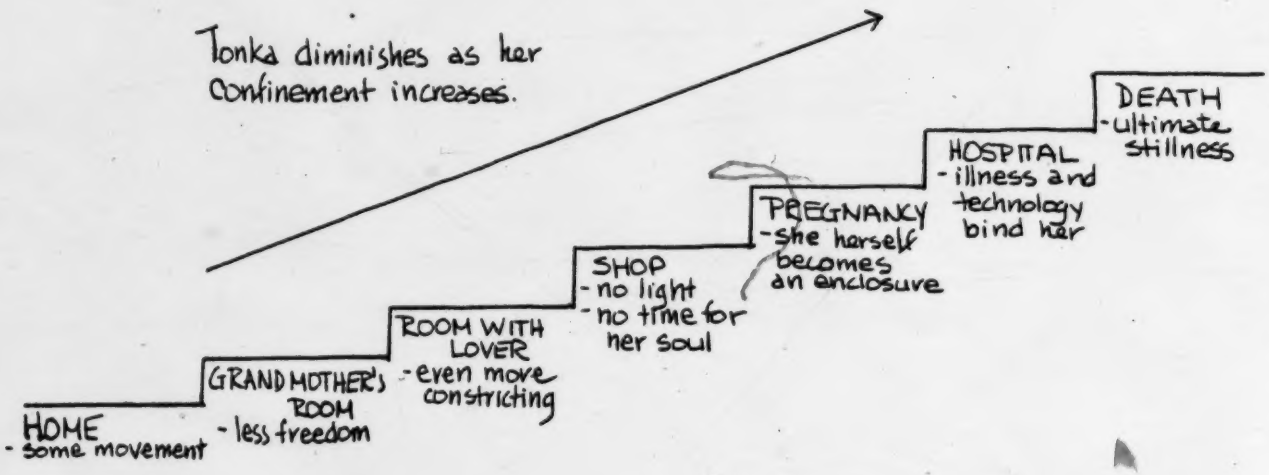
He rents a room (again an enclosure) to simplify this relationship with Tonka. But this closed space, along with her relationship to him, constricts her yet further:

> ...und während er die unwillkürlichen Bewegungen Tonkas verfolgte, kam es ihm vor, als wäre sein Gedanke wie ein Seil um ihren Knöchel geschlungen, das bei jeder Wendung kürzer wurde. (286)

When the time comes for the affair to be consumated, her lover makes this observation of Tonka:

> Ihre Haut schloss sich rührend wie ein <u>zu enges</u> Kleid um ihren Körper. 287)

From these and other metaphors, it becomes obvious that Tonka is on the same path as Homo, or even von Ketten, when they journey further and further into confinement. She progresses subtly but certainly through ever more constricting stages.



She begins in her home town, living in a small box-like house that time has forgotten. However, she is mobile; she walks the path to the prison (very much like Törless' walk to the academy) every day. When she takes the postion as a companion, she is confined slightly more; she can only "go out" two days a month. In the city, she is "kept" in a rented room by her lover, where their affair constricts her even more.

Her lover, on the other hand, is unconfined (except perhaps by his responsibity to her) and able to move (and think) freely. Indeed, his stages run almost directly opposite to Tonka's.

At first, he is in the rigid confines of the military. From there, he goes home, and then to a larger city, then back to his studies, which provide him with almost unlimited freedom (in the intellectual sense). His journey into mobility and vigorous inner development is inversely parallel to Tonka's progression into immobility and demise. More than that, her increasing constriction is a direct result of his relationship to, and power over her.

To support her lover's studies, Tonka accepts yet another postion.

> ...sie ging damals in ein grosses, hässliches Geschäft....sie sah die Sonne nicht...und man liess ihnen keine Zeit für ihre Seele. (289)
>
> ...sie welkte unscheinbar wie ein kleines Küchenkraut. (290)

This time she is completely shut away from the outside world, even to the point that there is no light in her

life.

Musil employs an extremely intricate and effective spacial image when he reveals that Tonka is pregnant. That character which has always been described through images of boxes, and closed dark rooms and spaces, suddenly becomes such an enclosure herself.

> ...den Mädchenkörper umformte zur Samenkapsel. (301)

At the same time that Tonka is becoming more and more like the enclosure which characterises her (and therefore less healthy) her lover is thriving and growing.

When his mother pleads with him to put Tonka aside, thus releasing her, he refuses, and makes the decision to keep her with him. The decision "sparks something within him" (292). He takes the underground train in a path straight back to Tonka and her non-rational environment and resumes his relationship with her. It is almost as if he "feeds" on her.

> Er arbeitete an einer Erfindung, deren Bedeutung schliesslich auch für andere gross sein würde, und da war es sicher, dass ausser dem Denken noch etwas dabei war, ein Mut...ein gesunder Lebenssinn, der ein Stern war, dem er folgte.
>
> Ein kleiner Spalt mit fernem Schimmer war offen, seine Gedanken begannen die Richtung hinzufinden. (293)

It can be observed, then, that he has that will to survive and pursue a goal that Homo did not, one which is crucial to his own survival, as has been seen in Die Portugiesin.

At the same time, he is torn between keeping her and rejecting her in a jealous rage. Because there is a strong

possibility (in his estimation) that the child she carries may not be his, and because she refuses to offer him "scientific " proof, the situation does not run according to the regulations that govern his way of thinking. His rigidity is so overwhelming that it is difficult for him to live with, and he torments her steadily because of it, but he does not release her. In fact, he seems (although perhaps not consciously) aware that he still needs her, and almost guards her:

> Dann begleitete er sie...weil er sich nicht traute, sie allein zu lassen. (295)

As Tonka's pregnancy progresses, so also does his intellectual accomplishment flourish:

> Es war...eine Zeit grosser wissenschaftlicher Erfolge für ihn. Er hatte seine Aufgabe in den Hauptzügen gelöst....Schon fanden Menschen zu ihm den Weg. (298)

This whole period of time is like an interlude in his life, a break with the routine of his existence, but somehow on a different level, not intruding into the normal. Musil uses the image of a wall of thorns, "ein Dornengerank" (280), alluding to the fairy tale of "Sleeping Beauty". Later he says:

> Tonka war in die Nähe tiefer Märchen gerückt. (280)

In such a magical, mystical environment, events will come to pass that concern the characters, but not the outside world itself.

It becomes obvious at this point in the story that Tonka comes increasingly closer to the realm of the

spiritual or unearthly. She now stands on the threshold between life and death. There is mention of the "wonderful process":

> ..der...die Haut des Bauches mit feinen roten und blauen Adern durchzog, so dass man darüber erschrak, wie nah der Aussenwelt das Blut kreiste, als ob das den Tod bedeuten könne. (301)

Once again, Tonka and her lover inhabit a "kleinbürgerliches Zimmer" (301), where both are quite isolated:

> Die Fenster des engen Hofes lagen blind im Schatten (302)

That is, they cannot see out, nor can light find its way in. Finally, Tonka becomes too ill, and consequently progresses into the even more constricting realm of a hospital bed, where she is restrained by her illness (to which she would not have fallen prey, had she not become a "capsule") and by medical technology, a field closer to his:

> Sie war ergriffen von der Welt und auf den Tisch geschnallt. (304)

The reader is informed immediately:

> An dem Tage wo sie aus dem Hause fortgekommen war ...war er wieder mehr er selbst. (303)

Thus it can be seen that he has achieved yet more freedom as a result of her confinement. When he goes to see Tonka, he does step briefly into her realm, but is safe there, because he has the freedom and strength to step out again at will.

> Wenn er an Tonkas Bett sass, war er daher oft stumm. (303)

> So sass er an ihrem Bett, war lieb und gut zu ihr, aber er sprach nie das Wort aus...Ich glaube an dich... (304)

> Und weil er an Tonkas Spitalbett oft wenig sprach, schrieb er ihr Briefe,...da erst fiel ihm ein, dass er die Briefe nie abgeschickt hatte. (304)

It is evident that the man for whom speaking and verbal communication was never a problem steps into her realm of non-speech, and cannot bring himself to say to Tonka that he believes in her. He cannot bring himself to make a statement based on faith alone, one that requires no proof or substantiation.

And so Tonka dies, quite alone, and enters the final stage of immobility--death. Her lover on the other hand, is strong, and able to continue. All previous tension is released and he goes on in his path:

> Die Spannung der letzten Woche...hatte sich gelöst. Er stand im Licht und sie lag unter der Erde, aber alles in allem fühlte er das Behagen des Lichts. (306)

Musil illuminates the interaction of rational and mystical in a different way in Tonka. The protagonist almost seems to "absorb" Tonka and that which she stood for.

> Er fühlte sie von der Erde bis zum Kopf und ihr ganzes Leben. Alles was er niemals gewusst hatte, stand in diesem Augenblick vor ihm, die Binde der Blindheit schien von seinen Augen gesunken zu sein... Und Vieles fiel ihm seither ein, das ihn etwas besser machte as andere, weil auf seinem glänzenden Leben ein kleiner warmer Schatten lag. (306)

With this conluding image of a warm shadow, Musil gives the reader one last ambiguous glimpse, and shows that this protagonist, like those before him, also experiences a revelation, a balance of rational and mystical. It is not

necessary that he himself has the death experience; his "anima," his "other half" accomplishes it for him.

> Das half Tonka nicht mehr. Aber ihm half es. (306)

It does help him. This protagonist has the strength and the knowledge of both realms to fall back on now. It is this flexible strength which Musil first introduced in Törless, then developed through to this point with the aid of spacial images, that will be evident once more in the last of Musil's works, Mann ohne Eigenschaften.

Chapter Four

Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften

Given the very numerous examples in Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften, it is evident from the start that Musil develops and expands his use of spacial imagery in this, his final and most celebrated work.

Because of the work's complexity and volume, it is difficult to treat it in the same detail as the shorter prose discussed up to this point. For this reason, this chapter will focus primarily on paths or escapes, pendular action, and window and portal scenes as spacial imagery indicative of the protagonist's development.

Discussion of these examples should provide evidence enough that Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften is no exception to Musil's established pattern of imagery. On the contrary, it proves itself a culmination of just those techniques which were evident in their embryonic stages in Törless.

Of all Musil's works, this, his last, has received the most attention from critics in all of its facets. The topic of space, and the "real" world as indicators of the protagonist's inner development is touched upon very briefly by a few. B.R. Hüppauf says this:

> Die äussere Wirklichkeit hat keinen Eigenwert, sie ist nur im Zusammenhang mit dem Inneren zu verstehen.[20]

In fact, Hüppauf devotes a chapter to "Raum als Erscheinung des Bewusstseins" in Von sozialer Utopie zur Mystik, continuing in the vein of the above statement, and suggesting that "space" and imagery alluding to it are a good indicator of the emotional state of the characters.

Another critic, W. Berghahn suggests:

> So ist jenes am Fensterstehen und Hinausblicken in die Nacht oder in eine befremdende Welt sogar zu einer Urgeste der Musilschen Romanfigur geworden. Jedesmal sind es ausgezeichnete Blicke im Schicksal der Figuren, Anfang oder Ende von etwas, wichtige Entscheidungen, Versuchungen...[21]

R. Whitinger also comments on physical movement:

> The examination of these movements facilitates, much as did the investigation of Törless' relationship to the military academy, the understanding of the most essential elements of his development.[22]

In light of what has already been determined in Musil's previous works, in the realm of spacial imagery, it is worthwhile and interesting to examine further those points which these critics have suggested with respect to space and movement in Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften.

Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften can be handled more easily if a technique with which to approach it is determined. A viable way is once again, through the concrete, observable actions inherent in the basic plot. R. Whitinger points out an interesting fact, from which a solid base for the "framework" of the plot may be derived. He identifies three "escapes" made by Ulrich, around which the plot revolves. Although the escapes are not true "physical" ones, they are

attempts to escape confinement to a defined space, to extend his capacities to a wider spectrum of life. The escapes pointed out by Whitinger are as follow:

First, the escape from the military to adopt the role of a scientist; second the departure from this role to a "vacation," in which he strives to find some area in which to apply his abilities (within the realm of the rational); and third the escape from the rational into the "other realm" of mysticism.

Within these broader categories, examination will reveal that Ulrich fluctuates often between adhering to this rational, logical, regimented sphere, and being attracted to the realm of the mystical, stressing once more the importance of the pendulum image. These two spheres (the rational and the mystical) will in turn be characterized by Ulrich's affinity for movement, and by his urges to take forceful action, or by his rejection of this quality within himself. It will be seen that he is never so isolated in one realm that the other ceases to affect him. Moreover, he is aware of this conflict within himself. In fact, the entire work revolves around his attempt to come to terms with these conflicting forces within himself.

> Musil is not a believer in absolutes, for they imply a rigidity which is closed to movement, and time necessitates movement.[23]

Finally, within a narrower spectrum, the images of doors or windows, and allusions to light and space, are incorporated into the story to further illuminate Ulrich's development.

A good overview of Musil's incorporation of spacial imagery in Mann ohne Eigenschaften can be obtained by adhering to this basic framework.

Of all Musil's protagonists, Ulrich is the one most aware of the value in remaining flexible. He is fully conscious (where those before him had displayed what seemed no more than instinctive awareness) that it is crucial to his own development not to allow himself to be constricted or bound (either physically or emotionally) by society or its norms. It is precisely this knowledge, coupled with the desire not to confine himself to certain properties and specifics -- and thus remaining flexible and "mobile"-- that earns him his title, "der Mann ohne Eigenschaften."

This should be qualified. It must not be suggested that Ulrich displays no qualities. Rather, he displays many, but his efforts not to adopt any specific qualities as indicative of his life-style or character assure that he is known by that title. His friend Walter explains this well in his discourse on "qualities" in Chapter 17:

> "Er ist ein Mann ohne Eigenschaften!"...Er ist begabt, willenskräftig, vorurteilslos, mutig, ausdauernd, draufgängerisch, besonnen...er mag alle diese Eigenschaften haben. Denn er hat sie doch nicht' Sie haben das aus ihm gemacht, was er ist, und seinen Weg bestimmt, und sie gehören doch nicht zu ihm. [24]

The awareness of the importance of flexibility is also the single most important reason for Ulrich's "escapes." All are made in the attempt to avoid restrictions, and to extend or expand the approaches inherent in his various

career choices beyond their narrow boundaries.

Ulrich's first career is with the military, as a soldier in the cavalry. Although he will not remain with this choice for long, it is an important one nontheless. At the beginning of the novel, Ulrich's character reflects an aggressive, forceful approach--an urge to "take action," indicative of a military approach. Again and again, he will be observed to draw upon his training as a soldier in order to achieve a battle-like "victory" over a situation. His own assesment of the profession is "a sharp and glowing instrument" with which he can "burn and cut the world for its own salvation" (36). It is also noteworthy that selection of this career imposes great restrictions on the realm of the mystical, non-rational in Ulrich's character. One can observe that throughout the first volume this mystical realm will be viewed as "the other" by Ulrich. Although he questions and examines aspects of it, his experiences within it are few. He is umfamiliar with, but inexplicably drawn to the emotional sphere of existence.

Musil dwells on Ulrich's first career for scarcely one page before he introduces the first of his protagonist's escapes. Ulrich becomes disenchanted rather quickly with his chosen profession. It is interesting that even in this short space, spacial imagery is employed to explain the reason for Ulrich's disenchantment and consequent path away from the military:

> ...und sah mit einemmal einen betrunkenen jungen Mann auf einem <u>leeren weitem Platz</u> randalieren, dem

> nur Steine antworteten. Als er das begriff, nahm er Abschied von dieser undankbaren Laufbahn...und verliess den Dienst. (36)

The first of Ulrich's series of conscious journeys away from restriction is one made out of his military career into the realm of science. Here, he tries his hand first as an engineer, then as a mathematician. It should be understood that this escape is not made because he is uncomfortable with the forceful approach advocated by the military. Instead, it is made in an attempt to extend and elaborate on this quality, but within a less restricted area.

> Ulrich's careers in engineering and mathematics constitute consecutive attempts to extend this aggressive aproach beyond the narrow horizons of the military profession to a wider spectrum of life...As an engineer, he hopes to approach all aspects of life--even such traditionally vague subjects as morality, ideas, feelings or matters of the heart...with that readiness for practical, unemotional action which had characterized his military career... [25]

But Ulrich is no happier in this profession. Through spacial metaphors, the reader is given to understand that Ulrich is still isolated too much in the realm of the rational, and shielded from the non-rational, thus maintaining an extreme that is not conducive to the full development of his character.

> ...der Rechenschieber, das ist ein kleines Symbol, das man in der Brusttasche trägt, und als einen harten weissen Strich uber dem Herzen fühlt:...(37)

Moreover, this career is still too constricting, as is suggested by the "frame" it creates, confining his lifestyle.

> Das war zweifellos eine kraftvolle Vorstellung vom

> Ingenieurwesen. Sie bildete den Rahmen eines reizvollen zukünftigen Selbstbildnisses, das einen Mann mit entschlossenen Zügen zeigte....(37)

Ulrich desires (although still not consciously, perhaps) an element of the mystical side of life. He complains that the scientists speak in a "besondere, steife, beziehungslose, äussere Art...die nach innen nicht tiefer als bis zum Kehldeckel reicht" (38). Where before he had the garrison walls to confine him, he is restricted here by the boundaries of his profession, "pinned" to his drawing board, like, and through his work. He is surrounded by men who refuse to apply their ideas to anything but their work, and do not think of turning their talent for understanding to their own emotions and feelings. Ulrich refuses to accept this.

Consequently, he turns to mathematics. This career is described with metaphors calling to mind the "white-hot instrument" of the military, but with one exception--the introduction of the concept of mobility:

> ...von der harten, mutigen, beweglichen, messer-kühlen-und-scharfen Denklehre der Mathematik. (39)

Ulrich's is a very different approach to science, indicating that he is beginning to lean slightly towards this non-rational sphere he faintly perceives.

> Er war weniger wissenschaftlich als menschlich verliebt in die Wissenschaft. (40)

After some time in this career, he emerges with "fragments," not only "of a new way of thinking," but more important "and of feeling" as well. But this image is blurred by "immer

zahlreicher werdende Einzelheiten" (47). Therefore the stage is set for Ulrich's second journey into what he feels is less confinement. He decides:

> ...sich ein Jahr Urlaub von seinen Leben zu nehmen, um eine angemessene Anwendung seiner Fähigkeiten zu suchen. (47)

Thus the Ulrich introduced in the second chapter displays the complex, dialectic character that this progression of careers has forged. Up to this point, Ulrich, like Törless and the male protagonists of the Drei Frauen trilogy, had been in danger of being trapped in the extreme of a one-sided existence. Now he reveals his flexibility with the conscious attempt to move out of the confinement in which he finds himself, expanding his "attack" beyond the drawing board and barriers of his profession.

When he is first seen, it is in a window scene. He is engaged in a very "scientific" activity: counting and timing the passing vehicles below:

> Er stand hinter dem Fenster, sah durch den zartgrünen Filter der Gartenluft auf die bräunliche Strasse und zählte mit der Uhr seit zehn Minuten die Autos, die Wagen, die Trambahnen...er schätzte die Geschwindigkeiten, die Winkel... (12)

Yet, ambivalently, he rejects this pasttime in just a few moments and laughingly labels it "Unsinn." When he leaves the window, it is with an air of resignation and renunciation. Musil describes the action as: "wie ein Mensch, der jede Berührung scheut" (13), which at first seems odd for this protagonist. This outward resignation to immobility is rapidly contradicted, however, by Ulrich's

next action, which assures the reader that he has without a doubt retained his propensity for forceful forward action.

> ...und als er...an einem Boxball, der dort hing, vorbeikam, gab er diesem einen so schnellen und heftigen Schlag, wie es in Stimmungen der Ergebenheit oder Zuständen der Schwache nicht gerade üblich ist. (13)

Musil's penchant for ambivalence is thus once again in evidence. Ulrich will vacilate more and more frequently now between the forceful approach to matters --his attraction to the scientists and scholars at Diotima's meetings-- and his questioning and rejection of this quality in the society in which he finds himself.

> As a "man without qualities", he hesitates, as he had throughout his antecedant development, to "realize" his "qualities" within the boundaries of established society and its professions, avoiding the imprisonment of his capabilities--typified by the forcefulness of his youth--within the immutable set of values of a profession.[26]

Ulrich is offered an opportunity to apply himself and his abilities in the form of the "Collateral Campaign." This is urged upon him by his father, who is characterized as "a man <u>with</u> qualities" (13). He attempts to stress the importance of securing "a definite position in life," and making progress in one's career (77). This path is, however, rejected at first by Ulrich and he continues in his restless search for an area in which to make better use of his abilities.

In this search, he continuously evaluates situations, attempting to uncover their "deeper" aspects. An aspect of the other world does in fact exist within him, but as yet it

lies submerged. In Chapter 39, Ulrich is described as "zugleich leidenschaftlich und teilnahmslos" (148). He engages in continuous, relentless, scientific scrutiny of the world around him, but as yet, he can only come up with a mathematical "additive inverse" solution, befitting his career.

> Es ist eine Welt von Eigenschaften ohne Mann entstanden. (150)

In the course of his descriptions of Ulrich's search for meaning and purpose, Musil also introduces the character that will represent the most intense facet of the non-rational, that is, Moosbrugger. In this figure are combined all the elements of emotion, sexual passion, violence and, above all, the anti-logical. It is Ulrich's thoughts and emotions towards this monster-like human being which arouse the memory of an episode in his own life, where emotions, rather than rational, intellectual thought, held the upper hand. This episode concerns the almost forgotten affair with the Major's wife (Chapter 32). Upon recalling this affair, Ulrich's interest in the non-rational sphere of existence (always present, but well submerged under his rationality) is called forth and intensified.

This brief interlude with the major's wife can be seen as the first of many journeys out of Ulrich's routine existence of concise, soldierly rigidity, into the realm of the mystical. So also can mere recollections of this time of unaccustomed passion (as well as thoughts about Moosbrugger) serve as indications that even the older Ulrich steps into

the "other world" from time to time.

In Ulrich's recollection, the affair with the Major's wife has an aura of the "non-real" about it. The extent of the passion he felt at the time was frighteneing to him, and perhaps because it suggested attachment and restriction. Ulrich took pains to re-enter his routine life as quickly as possible, and it is noteworthy that he finds an interim refuge on an isolated island:

> Ulrich aber, hatte damals schon keinen anderen Wunsch mehr, als von lauter Liebe so rasch und weit wie möglich aus der Nähe des Ursprungs dieser Liebe zu kommen. Er reiste blindlings darauflos, bis die Küste dem Schienenweg ein Ende machte, liess sich noch von einem Boot auf die nächste Insel übersetzen, die er sah. (124)

Later, in his recollection, he connects the soft peace he found on this island with his love for the major's wife:

> Er versank in der Landschaft, obgleich das ebensogut ein unaussprechliches Getragenwerden war, und wenn die Welt seine Augen überschritt, so schlug ihr Sinn von innen an ihn in lautlosen Wellen. Er war ins Herz der Welt geraten... (125)

It is to this utopian "other state" (which is also encountered in the warm isolated settings to which other Musilian protagonists have fled) that Ulrich will swing when the pendulum carries him away from the rational existence.

In his continuous attempt to remain unconstricted, Ulrich breaks off his affair with his mistress Bonadea. In doing this, he feels somehow that an equilibrium has been upset. It is clear, especially when considering the recollection of the "mystical" --love related-- experiences preceding this decision that a balance has indeed been

tipped, and a critical point in his development has been reached.

Ulrich's emotions and introspection are illuminated in a walk --a short journey which takes him away from the routine of his study, after he has sent Bonadea away. Musil stresses the notion of release in that he states that Ulrich:

> ...fühlte sich aus einem Kerker in ein weiches Bad versetzt. (129)

While taking this walk, Ulrich exhibits what has been determined as critical to his continued development, that is "mental mobility" (129). At the same time, he can be observed as trying to repress or subdue his urge for physical action, that drive which was evident in him at the outset of the novel.

In Chapter 40 Ulrich's pendular, ambivalent contemplation continues. He is described as having "intellectual suppleness" and a "flexible dialectic of feeling." Perhaps it is in this ability to be mobile in both spheres that the conflict he feels within himself is rooted.

> Ulrich ist ein Mensch, der von irgend etwas gezwungen wird, gegen sich selbst zu leben... (151-152)

This "irgend etwas" is not yet known to him. The dialectic aspect is even more clearly underlined on Ulrich's long walk home. The narrator explains: "Zwei Ulriche gingen in diesem Augenblick" (155). One is a resigned, sadly smiling Ulrich, who passively, unquestioningly accepts his

and society's qualities and roles. The other walks with clenched fists, angry and quick to question that with which he is displeased. It is this second, dark, less visible Ulrich that the protagonist will pursue in his attempt at understanding himself as a whole. It is this aspect which he perceives as the "real mind of the mind" (155). And it is this aspect that will bring about what his loss of equilibrium foreshadowed.

> Nur beinahe ein Zustand der Bekehrung, der Umkehrung... (155)

It is precisely this "conversion" which marks Ulrich's conscious rejection of the regimented ridigity of society. At the end of his walk, he becomes involved in a skirmish with the police, and is consequently arrested. After being "processed" mechanically by the police, Ulrich is pressed (against his will) into service with the patriotic "Collateral Campaign." From this point on, it is obvious that he is unwilling to participate in, and critical of this facet of existence. It conflicts directly with the attempts he has made until now to remain flexible, and precipitates the growth of his discontent with society as a whole.

> In some passages, Ulrich explicitly rejects... regimentation. There is his criticism of the legal system --compared elsewhere to the regiment...There is his rejection of philosophy on similar grounds....There is, finally, his long conversation with the general in which he criticizes modern science and the military for their one-sided approach to matters.[27]

Six months into his "holiday from life," Ulrich takes stock of what has happened so far. He is aware only of an

aimless swinging back and forth, and is frustrated and confused.

> ...während er sich in der kleinen und närrischen Tätigkeit, die er übernommen hatte, hin und her bewegen liess... (256)

He is clearly displeased by his position in the campaign. The advent of another window scene is preparation for the fact that Ulrich will make a decision.

In Chapter 62, Ulrich is observed in a night scene in front of his window. He observes the trees, snake-like, "seltsam schwarz und glatt" (252), and is drawn into the garden by some inexplicable urge. This is an almost Eden-like scene. He goes, "wie er war." At the door, he voluntarily shuts out the lights (indicative of his negation of the clearly-lit, "surface" existence) so that he will be better able to see in this darker sphere. This scene is reminiscent of Homo's "religious experience" in the forest. Ulrich is on a "path to the iron gate," which forms a cross with yet another path; that is, at a junction in his life. In the darkness of the trees, he is suddenly overwhelmed by the thought of Moosbrugger. Even now, his attitude is still one of ambivalence.

> Die Sentimentalität der Regung stiess ihn im gleichen Augenblick zurück, wo sie ihn berührte. (252)

It is clear however, that this brush with the mystical realm is a meaningful one. Ulrich's experience serves to sever, almost but not quite completely, the last ties which held him to the rational world. He is described as looking like

a "lunatic," and "detached from his background" (252). Revealing the urge for action he has exhibited from the first, Ulrich makes a confident decision. This is clear from the choice of imagery, as Ulrich returns to the house.

> ...aber er trat fest auf den Weg... (252)

But as yet, this decision must be delayed. As can be seen from the window scenes, Ulrich is still a passive observer of life, however restless he may appear. He will not take action until his scientific mind has examined and evaluated all facets of his situation in both possible spheres of existence, and the elements of his conflict become clearer to him.

This becomes possible at the final meeting of the Collateral Campaign. In this episode, the thoughts and emotions which Ulrich feels with respect to both realms are brought to light more clearly. The premonition he felt in the previous window scene is repeated.

> Ulrich fühlte ein unbeschädigtes Verständniss dafür in sich... (591)

The necessity of restless swinging back and forth between the two spheres seems surmounted and rendered unnecessary, and suddenly it all becomes very clear to him:

> ...so hängt auch das, so verschieden es aussieht, zusammen wie die Äste eines Baumes, die nach allen Seiten den Stamm verbergen....In diesen beiden Bäumen wuchs getrennt sein Leben. (592)

Ulrich recognises now what the narrator explained before with his reference to the "two Ulrichs." He has finally perceived the duality, and that fact that it is

incorporated within his own character. He also recognises that the "two selves" must be brought together, and experienced as a finely tuned balance:

> Seine Entwicklung hatte sich offenbar in zwei Bahnen zerlegt, eine am Tag liegende und eine dunkel abgesperrte, und der ihn umlagerte Zustand eines moralischen Stillstands, der ihn seit langem und vielleicht mehr als nötig bedrückt hatte, konnte von nichts anderem als davon kommen, dass es ihm niemals gelungen war, diese beiden Bahnen zu vereinen. (593)

His discontent until now has stemmed from the fact that this had never been done. Indeed, such a union at this point would prove impossible, for Ulrich has insufficient knowledge of the "other" realm. Experience with that realm is a necessity before a solution can be reached.

This enlightenment gives rise once again to the feeling Ulrich had when returning from the garden at night:

> Und wieder hatte er den nicht recht begründeten Eindruck, eine Entscheidung sei nahe. (599, compare 252)

The decision which is obviously not easily made by Ulrich is preceded by yet another window scene. At Count Leinsdorf's house, Ulrich regards the "dark surge" of protesters below the window. He appears to have cut himself on a sharp edge ("...er habe sich dieser an einer scharfen Schneide wehgetan" (630), thereby indicating the severing of the ties binding him to the rational. The fact that "a strange transformation" (631) takes place in him confirms this. Ulrich feels it as well. He perceives an "odd spacial inversion", and then, "just as if some chance had taken him through a secret connecting door," he asks himself "Kann man

denn aus seinem Raum hinaus, in einen verborgenen zweiten?" (632).

It is clear therefore, that the "union" which Ulrich had recognized as a necessity is now possible; the portal from one sphere to the other has been opened. Musil refers to this experience as a "wunderlichen Raumerinnerung der Vermischung des Geschehens vor und hinter den Fenstern" (632).

After the window scene at Count Leinsdorf's Ulrich has a strong urge to commit a "crime," and his thoughts are always drawn back to Moosbrugger (632 ff). Ulrich has made a decisive move towards action in some manner connected to the other, mystical sphere. It is related to the passionate affair of his youth, to Moosbrugger and his crimes of passion, and to the "mystical experience" he has dwelt on in previous recollections. Once again, the window proves itself the setting for important contemplation and decision making. This occurs at Arnheim's house (Chapter 120) and, as can be expected, Ulrich can be observed in the decision-making process again, weaving uncertainly between courses of action. Should he explain his views to Arnheim or not? Will he accept the offer put to him by Arnheim or no? He toys with stabbing Arnheim with a pocketknife, but discards that idea in favor of clapping him jovially on the back. Thus his ambivalence and the pendulous swinging image continues. In order to actualize his decision, Ulrich must pass through a symbolic "passage" to enter the other sphere.

This, Musil provides on Ulrich's walk back home.

> Er durchschritt einen Torbogen in einem etwa zehn Schritte lang neben der Strasse laufenden steinernen Gang, der von ihr durch dicke Gewölbepfeiler getrennt war; Dunkelheit sprang aus Ecken, Überfall und Totschlag fackelten in dem halberleuchteten Durchlass: heftiges, altertümlich und blutig feierliches Glück fasste die Seele an. (647)

Indeed, the change in "scenery" is immediately apparent. First, Ulrich meets and converses with a prostitute (which calls to mind Moosbrugger), and upon arriving at his house he finds Clarisse, whom "he had never before seen...in such a state of sensual excitement" (660). Moreover, he comes to the conclusion that she, like Moosbrugger, is insane. He reflects:

> Clarisse sei nicht ein ungewöhnliches, sondern im geheimen wohl bereits ein geisteskrankes Wesen. (662).

It is clear that he is already much more deeply immersed in the non-rational realm which at the beginning of the novel was but a hypothetical possibility to him. The decision for passage into the other realm is sealed with still another scene at a window, where Ulrich consciously realizes what decision the previous window scenes have indicated.

After previous escapes, Ulrich has always returned to the precise, regimented, routine world.[28] In this scene, the junction which was foreshadowed in the garden is realized. Ulrich will take the path into the shadowy side of his character--an experiment in the realm of neglected possibilities. This will necessitate a desertion of both the Collateral Campaign as well as the society of which

Ulrich has become so critical. Both are evident in Ulrich's third escape.

In the closing pages of the first volume, Ulrich receives the message that his father has died. His decision to leave home and routine is therefore assisted by the departure of the very figure that is representative of these elements.

The second volume begins with Ulrich's meeting with his "forgotten sister," Agathe, in his father's home. The plot will revolve completely around Ulrich's relationship to this character, which will be symbolic of Ulrich's very complex exploration and search for himself. From the beginning, it is evident that Agathe represents that "dark, neglected" side of Ulrich's character. Numerous references are made to the similarities Ulrich perceives between his sister and himself.

> ...er fand sich durch geheime Anordnung des Zufalls einem grosse, blonden, in zarte graue und rostbraune Streifen und Würfel gehüllten Pierrot gegenüber, der auf den ersten Blick ganz ähnlich aussah wie er selbst. (676)
>
> Es war ihm zumute, er wäre es selbst, der da zur Tür eingetreten sei... (694)

It also becomes evident that the character of Agathe represents the "anima," the feminine, mystical side of the human psyche. We have seen the Agathe figure in its embryonic stages in Bozena, Grigia, von Ketten's wife, and Tonka. Here in Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften Musil develops the character and her importance to the development of the protagonist to the fullest. Ulrich's reflections on the

feminine side of "man" do not stop at his realization that his sister represents that aspect of himself, in that he and she are so alike. He ponders the question of the "primal hermaphrodite" (687),the two spheres (masculine and feminine; the so-called yin and yang) of human existence, and relates them to his own life. In the recollections of his youth, he remembers:

> ...während Ulrich bloss in den mäannlicheren Unternehmungen führte... (706)

Thus it is evident that in his own life, one side of the balance of "male and female" is weighted more heavily. But even early in his life, the seeds of the ambivalence which will plague him later are sown, for noteworthy is his wish to "be a girl." The impulse behind such a wish to be a girl is thwarted by his father who, as the man with all of the "desirable" qualities, imposes them and their rigidity with characteristic forcefulness on his son. In the father's eyes, all qualities related to the feminine are to be suppressed and discouraged in a son. He even goes so far as to separate young Ulrich and Agathe as much as possible. The qualities of the feminine cannot, however, be erased completely in Ulrich. It is this attempted suppression of them which will give rise to the frustrating ambivalence later in Urich's life.

Ulrich's reunion with Agathe, who can be viewed as the forgotten, suppressed "side," as well as the forgotten sister, provides a path away from every one of the restrictions against which he has been struggling until now.

It provides escape from the Collateral Campaign and its (as well as Ulrich's own) urge for action. It is escape from society and its functions, for he is almost completely isolated with his sister. It defies the confinement and restriction imposed by his father's wishes, in that he is reunited with his feminine side. Lastly, it is a complete contrast to the usual forceful approach he adopts towards the feminine, for in his relationship to Agathe, Ulrich exhibits none of his habitual aggressivness towards women. It also proves to be an excursion into a realm associated with criminal and/or socially unacceptable behaviour. Thus this "escape" is precisely the one foreshadowed in the first volume by the parallel of the affair with the Major's wife and the thoughts of Moosbrugger. This life with his sister involves love (although it is not certain at just which level) as did the episode with the older woman, and, consequently, exposure to the elusive "mystical experience." It is an opportunity for defiance of society's norms and accepted modes (of which he is so critical) in that his relationship to Agathe borders on the incestual. And finally, it is experience with the "crime" which he feels mysteriously compelled to commit (thus placing him in a position like Moosbrugger's) in that he is a confidante in Agathe's plan to desert her husband, in her forgery of the Will, and in her defiance of their father's last wishes.

After his first day together with Agathe, Ulrich himself confirms what has happened until now:

"Eine grosse Veränderung seit gestern!"
dachte er. (686)

It can be seen then, that this, his third escape, is the biggest step taken yet on his path towards re-examining long neglected aspects of himself. It is not a mere "change of horses" as his first step was labelled. This volume's plot centres on Ulrich's outright rejection of the sphere of "action" and masculinity in a desire to exist in the neglected sphere of the non-rational.

As mentioned before, however, Musil is not an advocate of extremes. In order for Ulrich to survive, he must retain flexibility, and this cannot be achieved through the rigidity of the absolute. As can be expected, therefore, although Ulrich steps from one environment to the other, he does not lose that ambivalence which maintained his mobility prior to this. His conflict cannot be solved by a simple step from one realm to the other, by a shift from rational to mystical. It must find its solution in a fine balance between the two.

Consequently, just as Ulrich experienced the endless pendulum of his reflections while he was rooted in the rational, so also will this pendulum be in evidence in this second volume. The scene at the Swedish Rampart is the best indication of this. He is overcome by a "strong sense of action" (737), and yet, in a vehement statement of opinion quite contrary to this, Ulrich renounces the morality of his time.

Die Moral unserer Zeit ist, was immer sonst geredet

> werden möge, die der Leistung....Der Erfolg kann alles vergessen machen....Unser Zeitalter trieft ohnehin von Tatkraft. Es will nicht mehr unser Gedanken, sondern nur noch Taten sein....Es ist so einfach, Tatkraft zu haben, und so schwierig, Tatsinn zu suchen. (739-741)

Shortly afterward, Agathe makes this observation of him:

> Es fiel ihr auf, dass, ihr Bruder, während er seinen Kopf gesenkt hielt und leise gegen die Tatkraft sprach, mit der Klinge des Taschenmessers, das er, ohne davon zu wissen, nicht aus den Fingern liess, Schnitte und Striche in die Tischplatte kerbte, und es waren an seiner Hand alle Sehnen gespannt. (741)

Her metaphor is striking:

> das war ein sinnloser Zwiegesang über dem Orchester der anderen Worte, dem sie auch gar keinen Sinn verlieh...! (741)

This ambivalence persists throughout the published portion of the second volume. It does not seem unlikely that this path away from the routine will not be the last. It is conceivable that Ulrich will continue with these journeys until this ambivalence (which leads to his frustrating, oftentimes painful inner conflicts) is resolved in recognition and understanding of the duality of human existence, of which he had a glimpse at the conclusion of the first volume.

Further examination reveals an extensive use of spacial imagery. The house where Agathe and Ulrich meet again, and later Ulrich's home itself are described often as dark and shadowy, underlining the fact that this is an excursion on Ulrich's behalf into the "dark, neglected" sphere of existence.

> Den ganzen Tag schon war diese Zimmer künstlich verfinstert gewesen; es war satt von Schwarz.

(677)

> ...die Wohnzimmer dunkel und geschützt, und die Fenster glichen tiefen Lichtschächten, durch die der Tag so zart und starr hereinkam, als bestünde er aus dünnem Elfenbein. (749)
>
> In den Leeren, ganz in den Schatten der Einsamkeit gehöhlten Zimmern... (858)

Ulrich's and Agathe's bedrooms are likened to "padded cells" (719), perhaps an allusion to the fact that they are living removed from the rational world. Agathe herself, although representative of Ulrich's shadowy other self, is almost always referred to as surrounded by light. She is like an island in this dark environment, to which Ulrich can turn when he feels the need to touch the non-rational.

> ...und die schwarze Erscheinung mit dem blonden Haar schien in einer Grotte aus Luft zu stehn, durch die strahlender Glanz floss. (694)
>
> ...ungefähr dort...hatte sich Agathe eine höchst persönliche Halbinsel geschaffen. (717)
>
> ...die Stehlampe bestahlte sie gemeinsam, so dass am Fussboden ein grosses Blatt aus Licht entstand, auf dem sie sich im Dunkeln befanden. (722)
>
> Ihre Spur war durch aufflammendes und verlöschendes Licht gekennzeichnet. (893)

Through this ambivalent image, Musil stresses and intensifies the ideas of Ulrich's escape. Agathe is isolated in islands of light from the dark environment of the house, which is in turn (by way of its darkness) further isolated from the outside world. Therefore, through his interaction with Agathe, Ulrich is doubly, almost thermally isolated from his routine.

There are many more such "ambivalent" spacial images,

emphasizing Ulrich's own state of "suspension" and confusion.

> Der Eigennutz blickte durch die Scheiben gerührter Augen wie eine Laterne, die man am hellen Tag brennen lässt... (691)
>
> Tages-und Kerzenlicht spielte auf ihren Gesichtern... (702)
>
> ...wie von den Kerzen, die bei Tag brennen... (853)

Images of doors are once again present within this third escape. Musil refers to them often, and stresses the concept of the "threshold" this time.

> Als er aber durch die Türe trat, stiess er im Nebenzimmer mit seiner Schwester zusammen. (694)
>
> Sie standen an die Pfosten der Türe gelehnt... (702)
>
> ...als sie auf der Schwelle der Hütte standen und die niedere Tür sich in das Dunkel des Abends öffnete ... (745)

Agathe reflects on her brother's action, perhaps the best explanation of Musil's choice of this imagery:

> ...oft schien ihr, dass sich alles, was er sagte, gerade dahin bewegte, ja sogar jedesmal gegen Ende immer genauer, und erst mit dem letzten Schritt vor der Schwelle haltmachte wo er das Unternehmen jedesmal aufgab. (747)

This can be viewed as a certain indication that this is not Ulrich's last "journey," that he will eventually step <u>over</u> a threshold, and find the identity and purpose for which he searches.

To aid in the presentation of Ulrich's development as a character, Musil turns once again to the image of the window. However, in this volume, with the introduction of

Agathe, a "mirror image" of himself, the genre of the window centres around the concept of mirrors and reflections. Ulrich actually uses his relationship to Agathe as a window into himself; through her, his introspection is made simpler: "...als sähe ich mich in den Scherben eines Spiegels."(744) Agathe too, has a noteworthy experience before a mirror.

Since their meeting, Agathe and Ulrich should not be considered as seperate entities, but rather as two halves of a whole. Given Musil's lengthy discourses (through Ulrich) regarding hermetic, primal duality, it is not unreasonable to assume that those thoughts experienced by her are symbolic of what Ulrich feels when he succumbs to the dark, non-rational sphere of existence. In Chapter 21, there is a long mirror scene illuminating Agathe's (Ulrich's other half) introspection:

> ...es hatte mit dem Gesicht durch einen Zufall angefangen, denn ihr Blick war daraufgefallen und nicht mehr aus dem Spiegel zurückgekommen. Sie wurde so fest gehalten...In dieser Weise wurde sie ohne Eitelkeit von der Landschaft ihres Ichs festgehalten, die ihr unter einem Hauch von Glas vor Augen lag. (852)

Later, Agathe and Ulrich stand together before a mirror (938). The idea that the two people compose a complete whole is not a new one. It has been evident prior to this, in Vollendung der Liebe. There, Musil devoted the entire work to the concept of "unions" or completion, which is in evidence here as well. Ulrich is sensitive enough to understand what the reunion with Agathe means. In a

mystical experience not unlike von Ketten's he realizes the implications of having a visible, "other half" to his character.

> ...dass er zwar, ohne zu zweifeln, in seinen eigenen Schuhen stand, sich aber dennoch aus sich hinübergezogen fühlte, als sei ihm das selbst ein zweiter, weit schöner Körper zu eigen gegeben worden.... "Ich weiss jetzt was du bist: Du bist meine Eigenliebe'...und nun ist sie offenbar durch Irrtum oder Schicksal, in dir verkörpert gewesen, statt in mir selbst'...Es war sein erster Versuch an diesem Abend, die Ankunft seiner Schwester in einem Urteil festzuhalten. (899)

Perhaps it is because of the presence of this vocal, physical other self, that no need arises for the symbolism of the window scenes, as there was in Musil's work prior to this. Before, the scenes at the window had provided the protagonist with a view of both spheres of existence; a link between the two worlds. Now, with Agathe's presence, this link is no longer necessary. She <u>becomes</u> the window into the other realm. The fact that she is so like Ulrich and appears as his forgotten half, now living in peace and harmony with him, suggests that this protagonist is coming closer to a successful balance of the two. With Agathe, Ulrich feels the confidence of transcending all of what he has experienced until now, the rational as well as the non-rational. The unity he shares with her elevates him and protects him from all that confined him before: "Ein tiefer Graben unweltlicher Herkunft schien sie in ein Nirgendland einzuschliessen" (1025).

The isolation in which Ulrich basks will not last though. It has been observed with other Musilian

protagonists, in their journeys to and experiences with isolation, that if their fate was one of survival, a return from this isolation was essential. The pendulum must return. It can therefore be assumed that Ulrich will leave this setting, and make a return to his routine, enriched by his experiences here.

Musil's insertion of the Asylum episode is his last comment (in the published fragment of the work) on the crucial role of flexibility with respect to the survival of the character. Chapter 33, devoted to the visit to Moosbrugger's place of confinement, is filled with spacial imagery. The hospital itself seems an endless maze of iron doors and constricting rooms, and the overriding feeling is, of course, one of stifling restriction. This is not unusual. But Musil goes one step further:

> Meterdicke Bleibarren schienen zwischen diesen Seelen und der Welt zu liegen. (984)

These people, confined as they are, with no opportunity for movement or escape, are isolated not only physically from the outside world, but from life itself.

> ...wie fremde, in einen gemeinsamen Käfig gesperrte Vögel, von denen jeder die Sprache eines anderen spricht. (987)

Clarisse, now recognizably less rational, feels this confinement too. She is described as perceiving a "sonderbare Verbundenheit" (988). The man she observes is likened to a caged monkey, and witnessing the doctor restraining him, she feels a strange sensation:

> ...wie wenn man plötzlich das Gefühl unter den

Füssen verliert. (989)

That is, her ties to reality and the rational are weakening perceptively. The tour continues, through what seem endless iron doors, and in the last room they view, the feeling of constriction is at its strongest. Here the inmates are forced to "stand by the wall,or sit on the benches that go along the wall " (990).

The inmates stand close to the door; some even look as though they are carved into the doorposts. This entire scene suggests a straining, a pressing towards extremities; a struggle against the confinement which prevents their movement, either physically or emotionally. It is without a doubt symbolic. Musil continually equates the concept of extremes, of one sidedness and lack of mobility with insanity, that is, with absence of character and the inability to exist independently (or within society).

With this scene, Musil phrases a warning against restrictions and confinement. The character that does not possess the capacity for evading these restrictions will share their fate--utter loss of self. Although it cannot be predicted which path Ulrich will take after Chapter 38, it is evident that he, more than any Musilian protagonist, knows the value of flexibility, and uses this knowledge to his advantage. Even Ulrich's last appearance in the published version --where he is drawn alternately to flight with Agathe and to involvement in society's actions-- as well as the bulk of analyses on the novel's posthumously

published "conclusion,"[29] show him retaining this "pendularity" or "mobility": ever striving to hold a balance on his relationship to "life's true and ineluctable antithesis."[30]

Conclusion

This investigation has shown that there is one main feature characterizing the more positive protagonist in Musil's work: the ability to move freely and in a balanced manner between the realms of the rational and the mystical. This means that a certain cyclical action must be completed, if the character is to survive, a movement indicative of an effort to relate to both "poles" or "sides" of that antithesis --"ratio-mysticism," "forcefulness and love"-- so prominent in Musil's works.

It has been suggested[31] that the necessary solution for Musilian protagonists is a synthesis of the two opposing extremes of rational and mystical. It is this writer's opinion that this suggestion of synthesis is too simplified. In Musil's work there is emphasis instead on the more sophisticated image of the pendulum; a back/forth, in/out, diastole/systole action which is at once both as complex and simple as breathing. Both phases of the action must be completed; each is dependent on the other.

The positive characters in Musil's works -- Törless, Claudine, von Ketten and Ulrich --all exhibit their capacity for this movement. Their experience within the two opposing modes of existence is eventually tempered, balanced. They develop and exploit their knowledge that such a balance allows for a further healthy development of character, and ultimate survival.

Those characters for whom movement is a problem, for whom there is no return or swing back, thus no flexibility, are caught and trapped in the one extreme. This is seen in the case of Veronika, Homo and Tonka. These characters will not survive as surely as if they had taken a breath, never to release it, or expelled one and never taken another.

To be sure, these extremes are encountered as well by the other characters, but it is their flexibility, and consequent ability to counterbalance existence in one extreme with the capacity to function as well in the other, which assures that their development proceeds positivley.

Musil illuminates this capabiltity for "healthy" movement, for the flexibility that allows the completing "swing," almost exclusively through spacial imagery: doors/windows, thresholds/borders, darkness/light, space/confinement and departures/returns.

This investigation has attempted to show the very close connection between the external, physical action and the characters' inner emotions and development. Musil introduces this approach in his Törless novel, and proves its viability by developing it throughout his five novellas, and finally exploiting it to its fullest in Mann ohne Eigenschaften.

Thus he illuminates the very intricate and complex inner landscape of his characters, and his extremely sensitive and complicated themes, with a graspable, concrete imagery, the study of which proves a valuable first step

towards understanding and linking the main ideas of Musil's major prose fiction.

Notes

[1]Frederick G. Peters, Robert Musil, Master of the Hovering Life (New York:Columbia University Press, 1978), p. 27.

[2]See Annie Reniers-Servranckx, Robert Musil. Konstanz und Entwicklung von Themen, Motiven und Strukturen in den Dichtungen (Bonn:Bouvier, 1972). See also Raleigh G. Whitinger, Military Institutions, Figures and Values in the Novels of Robert Musil Diss. University of British Columbia, 1976.

[3]Robert Musil, Gesammelte Werke 6. Prosa und Stücke ed. Adolf Frisé (Hamburg:Rowohlt, 1978). All further references to this work appear in text.

[4]Whitinger, p.111.

[5]Whitinger, p. 120.

[6]Whitinger, pp. 121-122.

[7]Whitinger, p. 129.

[8]Peters, p.85.

[9]Servranckx, p.144.

[10]Peters, p. 70.

[11]Servranckx, p. 147.

[12]This image of increasing constriction as the characters come closer and closer to the realm of the nonrational and mystical will also become evident in the Drei Frauen trilogy. Homo, von Ketten and Tonka all experience progressing phases of confinement, and their survival depends on their ability to escape from it in time.

[13]Peter, p.71.

[14]Peters, p. 72.

[15]This theme is found also in Vollendung der Liebe and to some extent also in Mann ohne Eigenschaften. Peters elaborates in his chapter entitled "Frustration and Perfection" pp. 67-69. A pure, perfect love is one that is elevated far above the worldlz and the physical--one in which a spiritual union is far more meaningful than a physical one.

[16]Examination will reveal that all Musilian protagonists, with the exception of Veronika, make a journey at one time in their life to a warm sultry region, representative of the mystical emotional mode of existence.

[17]Servranckx, p. 160.

[18]Servranckx, p. 172.

[19]It is interesting that the cat is referred to as a "sie," therefore representative of the same element of the human psyche as the women in Musil's works, the anima.

[20]Bernd Rüdiger Hüppauf, Von sozialer Utopie zur Mystik. Zu Robert Musils Roman "Der Mann ohne Eigenscahften" (Munich: Fink, 1971) p. 28.

[21]Wilfried Berghahn, Die essayistische Erzähltechnik Robert Musil. Eine morphologische Untersuchung zur Organisation und Integration des Romans,Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften Diss. (Bonn: 1956) p. 16.

[22]Whitinger, p. 231.

[23]Lisa Appignanesi, Femininity and the Creative Imagination. A Study of Henry James, Robert Musil and Marcel Proust (London: Vision, 1973) p. 153.

[24]Robert Musil, Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften (Hamurg: Rowohlt, 1978) p. 65. All furhter references to this work appear in text.

[25]Whitinger, p. 237.

[26]Whitinger, p. 245.

[27]Whitinger, p. 266.

[28]He goes from his affair with the Major's wife back to the military, from his "vacation from life" to a position in the regimented "Collateral Campaign", and from his reveries and thoughts of love, passion, the mystical , back to the "real" world.

[29]See Elisabeth Albertsen, Ratio und "Mystik" im Werk Robert Musils (Munich: Nymphenburg, 1968). See also Wolfdietrich Rasch, "Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften. Eine Interpretation des Romans." In Der deutsche Roman. Vom Barock zur Gegenwart. Struktur und Geschichte, vol II, ed. Benno von Wiese. (Düsseldorf: Bagel, 1963) pp. 361-419. See also Whitinger.

[30]See Heribert Brosthaus, "Robert Musil's 'wahre Antithese'," in Wirkendes Wort, 14 (1964), pp.120-140.

[31]See Peters.

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